

## EXPERIENCE, DISCOVER & VALORISE HIDDEN TREASURE TOWNS AND SITES OF THE ADRIATIC AREA

### EXCOVER –LOCAL REPUTATION ANALYSIS

#### PREDAPPIO MUNICIPALITY

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## 1. Introduction to Reputation Analysis

Predappio Municipality participate in the EXCOVER Project with the objective of developing sustainable tourism as privileged driver of economic growth, because currently tourist inflows are scarce, well below the potential level that local resources could be able to attract. Therefore, in order to devise an effective strategy to make Predappio a popular tourism destination, it is necessary to understand why much people do not choose it as a destination for their trips and vacations, and what changes could enhance its tourist attractiveness. In particular, the focus is on:

- how (little) popular Predappio is,
- which aspects it is better known for,
- with what it is associated in the thought of people from different countries,
- how potential visitors perceive it
- what dissuades them from visiting,
- what is the idea that tourists get from experiencing the destination.

To investigate the collective judgments of both potential and actual tourists about Predappio as a tourism destination, a demand-based Reputation Analysis is carried out. The object of investigation is the reputation of the area that it encompasses, to a certain extent, the construct of satisfaction with regard to actual tourists (to be induced to revisit), but it is measurable also with reference to just potential visitors (the main target to be attracted to develop the local tourism sector). Moreover, it has been shown that a favorable reputation can positively influence the image of a destination<sup>1</sup> (that is conveyed to the general public of potential visitors), the perception of its value and the tourists' loyalty<sup>2</sup>.

The current Reputation Analysis relies on both direct (based on sample surveys) and indirect (web-based) approaches. This report, examines different information from multiple sources:

- Google Trends;
- Survey interviews to tourists in Predappio.

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<sup>1</sup>Marinao, E., Torres,E.,Chasco, C. (2012).Trust in tourist destinations. The role of local inhabitants and institutions. Acad. Rev. Latinoam. Adm.51,27–47.

<sup>2</sup>Christou, E. (2007).Tourist destinations as brands: the impact of destination image and reputation on visitor loyalty. In:Keller, P., Bieger,T. (Eds.), Productivity in Tourism: Fundamentals and Concepts for Achieving Growth and Competitiveness. Erich Schmidt Verlag, Berlin, pp. 57–67.

## 2. Google Trends analysis

In order to assess how much Predappio is actually (un)known at both the national and international level, what it is associated with in the view of the general public and how popular local attractions are, data from Google Trends were analyzed (period of the execution: 01 August 2020 – 01 October 2020). Google Trends is a search trends feature that allows to see how often specific keywords, subjects and phrases have been queried over a specific period, by showing the frequency with which a given term is entered into Google's search engine, relative to the site's total search volume, based on a sample of Google searches.

The search terms, used in the analysis, are the following:

- Predappio
- Comune di Predappio
- Hotel Predappio
- Sangiovese
- Rocca delle Caminate
- Casa-Natale Mussolini
- Casa del Fascio
- Architettura del Novecento
- Architettura razionalista
- Cripta Mussolini
- Agriturismo Predappio
- Bed and breakfast Predappio
- Fascismo Predappio
- Predappio bicicletta
- Predappio mountain bike
- Hotel Condè Resort
- Musei Predappio
- Predappio Eventi
- Cantine Predappio
- Premilcuore
- Bertinoro
- Santa Sofia

For each search word, along with the global search volume, the following categories were considered:

- Arts & Entertainments,
- Beauty & Fitness,
- Books & Literature,
- Business & Industrial,
- Food & Drinks,
- Travel
- Games,
- Hobbies & Leisure,
- Jobs & Education,
- Shopping,
- Sport

### 2.1 Combinations between Predappio and neighbor and competitor locations, attractions and events

The following terms were searched in combinations with the aim to explore the differences and analogies between Predappio and neighbor and competitor locations, attractions and events. As Goggle Trends is a tool that uses search queries data to detect the relative popularity of searched terms, the benchmarking is useful to detect different dynamics of keywords and how much each location is actually (un)known.

### 2.1.1 Predappio + Bertinoro + Premilcuore + Santa Sofia

Premilcuore, Bertinoro and Santa Sofia are popular destinations very close to Predappio that attracts many visitors and tourists throughout the year.

**Premilcuore** is a small town in the center of Romagna, also an entry point to the Casentino and Campigna Forest Park, from the side of the Rabbi river. There are several buildings which testify to the town's medieval origins including the Fortress above the town, the noteworthy Palazzo Briccolani, the Oratory of San Lorenzo, the Mogio Oratory and the Parish Church of San Martino. Premilcuore is also home to the Romagnolo Mountain Wildlife Museum and is a prime tourist destination for nature lovers and those who appreciate the peace of the ancient woods.

The Rabbi river has always been a resource for the town with its caves, fresh pools and large stones on which to spread a towel and sunbath.

**Santa Sofia** stretches over the green hills of the Apennines between Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, along the Bidente river valley, at the heart of the 'Parco delle Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona and Campigna'. Surrounded by the greenery of the 'Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi', of which it hosts the headquarters and a Visitor Centre, the territory of Santa Sofia offers visitors fascinating natural places, such as the Campigna forest and the artificial basin of the Ridracoli da.

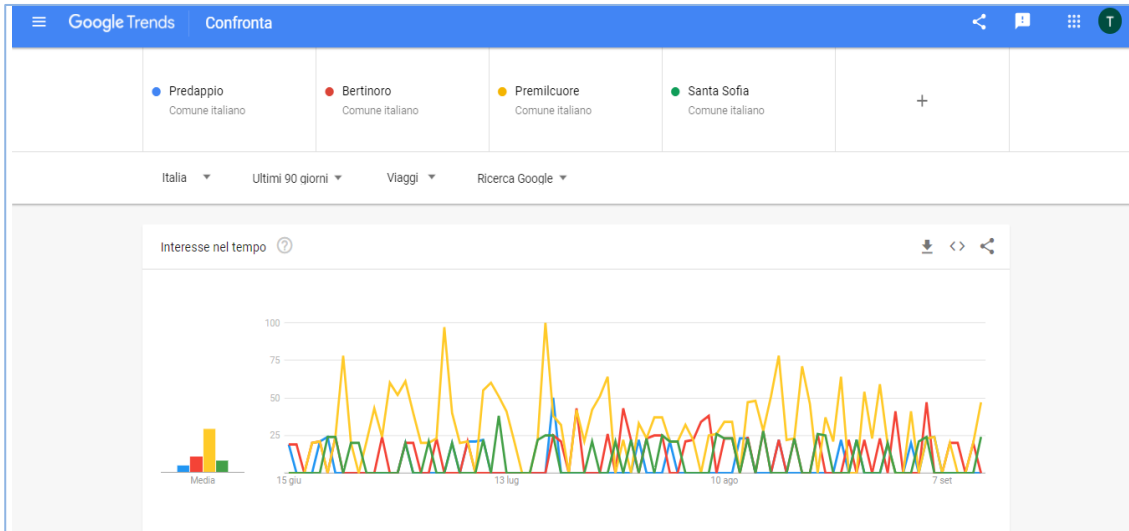
Today Santa Sofia is a lively town offering plenty of things to see and do all year round, with its good living, nature and contemporary art. The town is indeed **home to the Contemporary Art Gallery "Vero Stoppioni"** where many works by the artist Mattia Moreni are on display. Scattered through the river park are also sculptures by various artists among whom are Anne and Patrick Poirier. A nation-wide renowned art festival is also organized: the Premio Campigna.

**Bertinoro**, located the heart of Romagna, along the slopes of the hills of the Forlì Apennines, just a few kilometers from Via Emilia, 15 km from Forlì and 13 km from Cesena, overlooks a fascinating landscape, where the view goes as far as to the sea. Bertinoro is renowned for its wines and food. Besides the regional winery 'Cà de Bé', several wine cellars are part of the Road of Wines and Tastes of Forlì-Cesena and can be visited to taste the typical local wines Albana and Sangiovese.

The graph reported in figure 1 shows the frequency of searched keywords, the geographical area is set at Italy, the time filter is set over the past 90 days and the category filter will be set to "travels".

The results of the data analysis present **Premilcuore as the most popular keyword**, with a curve of possible seasonality with peaks during weekends, followed by Bertinoro, Santa Sofia and **Predappio**, that provides **the lowest values**.

Figure 1 Comparison between Predappio, Bertinoro, Premilcuore and Santa Sofia



### 2.1.2 Rocca delle Caminate, Rocca Albornoziana (Forlimpopoli), Fondazione Museo Interreligioso (Bertinoro), Fortezza di Castrocaro Terme, Rocca di Meldola

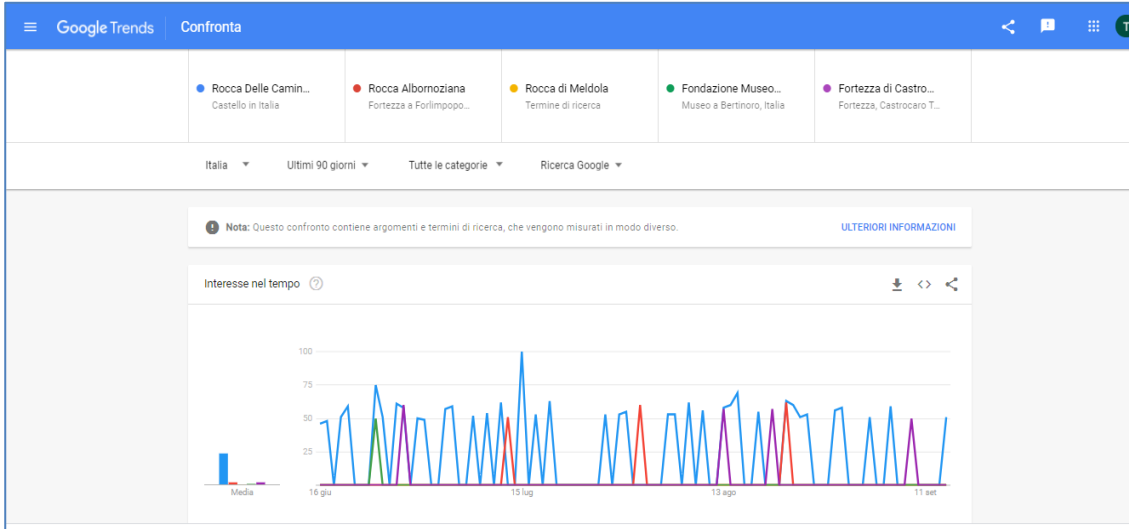
The Rocche are Italian fortified strongholds or fortresses, typically located on a hilltop, beneath or on which the inhabitants of a historically clustered village or town might take refuge at times of trouble. They are scattered throughout Italy and plenty of them are in Romagna.

Today some are in ruin, but many have been restored to either their original design and have become popular tourists' attractions.

The graph reported in figure 2 shows the frequency of searched keywords, the geographical area is set at Italy, the time filter is set over the past 3 months and no filters for category.

The results of the data analysis present **Rocca delle Caminate as the most popular keyword**, with highest popularity on weekends, while nearby Rocche show a slight interest for all the searched period, which correspond to last summer.

Figure 2 Comparison between Rocche and Fortresses



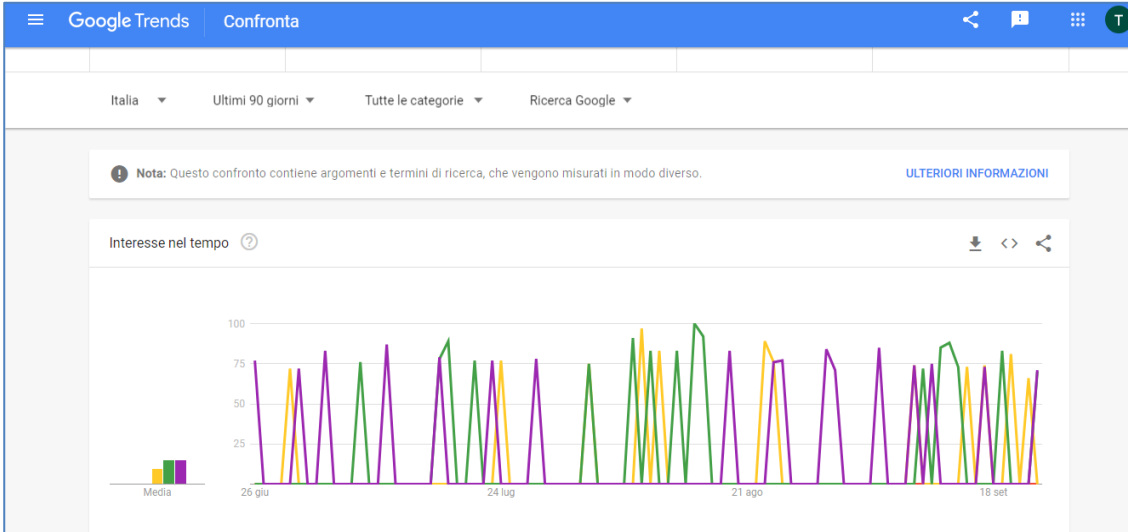
### 2.1.3 Cantine Predappio + Cantine Bertinoro + Sangiovese di Romagna + Cantine Romana + Vini dell'Emilia Romagna (Ita/Eng)

All above mentioned terms are related to Romagna Vines. The aim of the research is to detect the intensity of interest for the terms Predappio canteens and Sangiovese in relation to Bertinoro canteens, Romagna canteens and Emilia-Romagna vines.

The graph reported in figure 3 shows the frequency of searched keywords, the geographical area is set at Italy, the time filter is set over the past 90 days and no filter category has been applied.

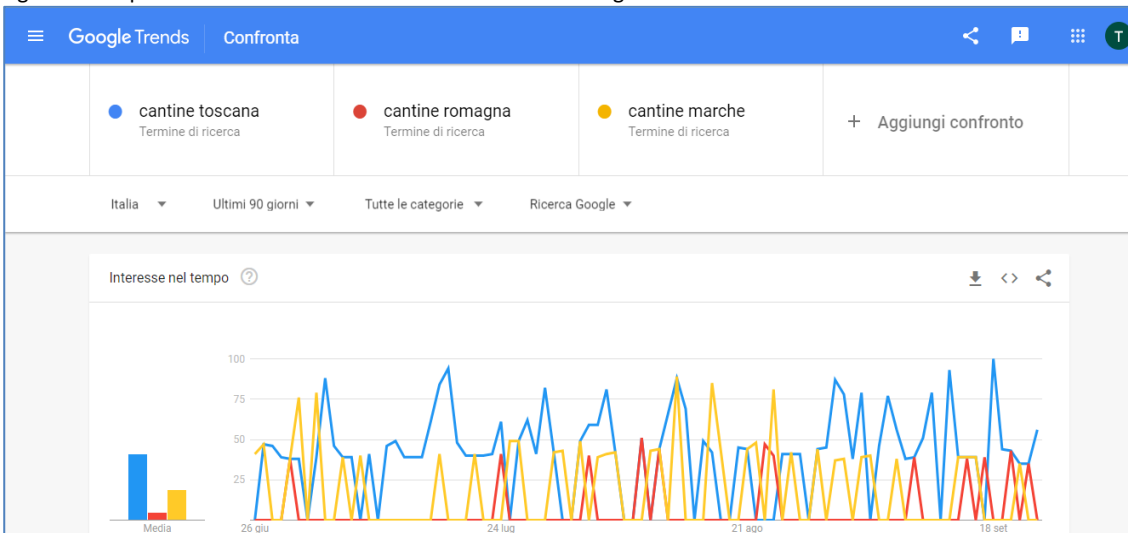
The data present **no results for Cantine Predappio and Cantine Bertinoro**, which means that very few people have been searching for these terms, while Sangiovese di Romagna + Cantine Romana + Vini dell 'Emilia Romagna (Ita/Eng) as searched keywords, show popularity during weekends from the end of June until the end of August, while in September terms were googled far more, probably due to the upcoming harvest.

Figure 3 Comparison between terms related to local canteens and vines



In a compared search between Cantine Toscana + Cantine Romagna + Cantine Marche, geographical area set at Italy, time filter over the past 90 days and no filter category applied, the results denote a constant and high interest for the terms Cantine Toscana, with a slight decrease in August, probably due to other vacation interests, an interesting trend for the popularity of the term Cantine Marche, while Cantine Romagna is the less popular term, with a slight increase from September on, as showed in figure 4.

Figure 4 Comparison between cantine Toscana + cantine Romagna + cantine Marche



In the last decade, wine tourism has become a key component of tourism until being today recognized as an essential segment of the tourism industry. Many wine regions and tourism destinations have realized that the



benefits of wine tourism extend well beyond the cellar door to all areas of the regional economy. Wine, food, tourism and the arts collectively comprise the core elements of the wine tourism product and provide the lifestyle package that wine tourists seek to experience. **If efficiently developed, wine tourism represents an excellent opportunity for destinations to diversify and enhance consumer's value.**

**These results suggest the development of a framework for comparisons and benchmarking between wine tourism destinations, in order to understand both policies and strategies implemented by neighbour regions and local and regional branding for marketing and promotion.**

Searches run from the following countries were analyzed:

- Country of the concerned location,
- All the neighboring countries,
- Worldwide.

## 2.2 Dynamics of the popularity of Predappio

**Predappio:** The dynamics of the term **Predappio**, illustrated in fig. 5, shows a constant and not very elevated level of popularity of keyword during the 3 months set as time frame, no filter category applied and Italy as geographical frame, with the only peak of popularity in mid-September, – presumably due to a new exhibition opening at Casa Natale di Benito Mussolini, even if a research of the popularity of the term “Il paese dei Mussolini” produced no evidence.

**It must be noticed the low concentration of popularity during mid-August (11-17 August), which corresponds to the period of highest demand and travel is most active throughout Italy.**

Nevertheless, setting the filter category “Travels”, it is interesting to note that the term Predappio was explored particularly on Fridays and Saturdays, which suggests the intention of potential visitors to visit the place on weekends, as shown in fig. 6.

The same research, set with time filter over the last 12 months, was conducted to consider the intensity of popularity of the term Predappio during the whole year in order to grab a sort of seasonal patterns, which means the online patterns of tourist demand, as shown in fig. 7. The graph shows more searches at the end of October, 9-15 February, 15-21 March and 12-18 July, and a fair popularity from 9<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August. October and July are probably connected to the anniversary of the march on Rome on Mussolini's birthday, while the search popularity in February and March should be further investigated. Accurate forecasting of tourism demand is of utmost relevance for the success of tourism businesses, as it reflects online planning behavior of

travelers before visiting a destination. The online search should be confronted with initial data set of monthly aggregated tourist arrivals (autoregressive model).

Figure 5- Predappio Comune italiano last 3 months

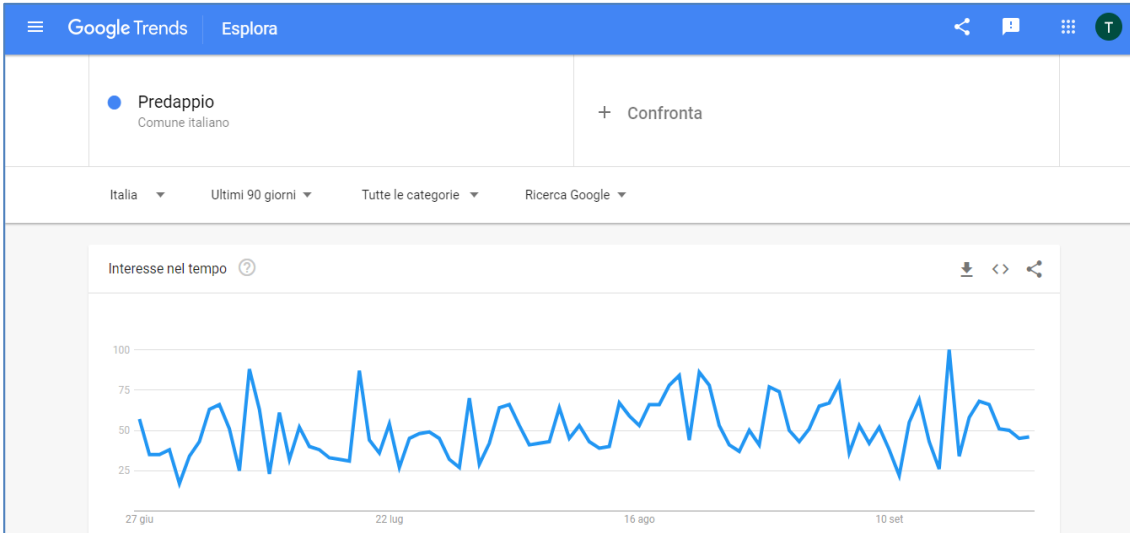


Figure 6 – Predappio Comune italiano, last 3 months – Travel

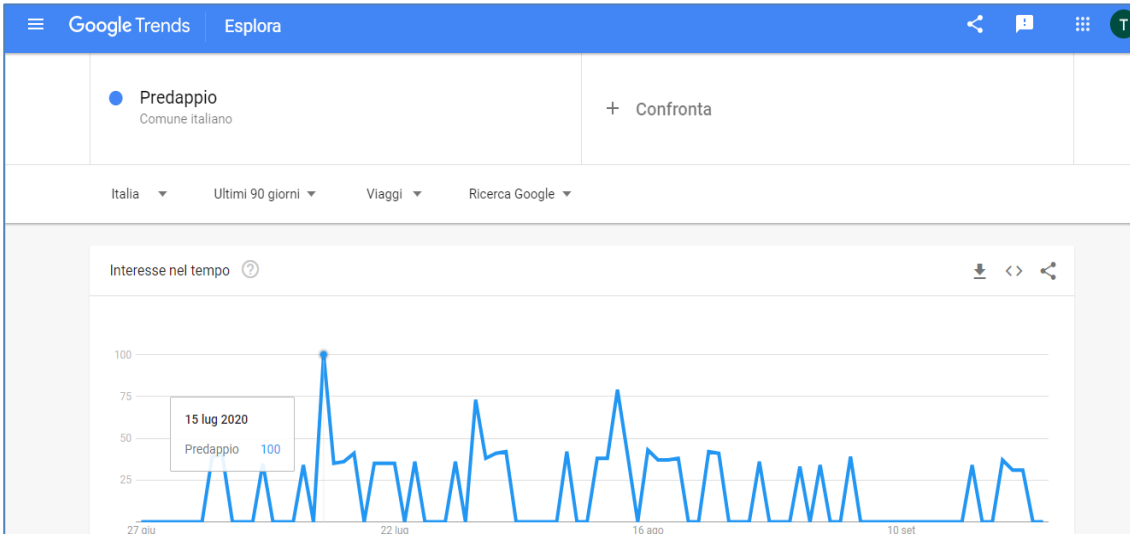
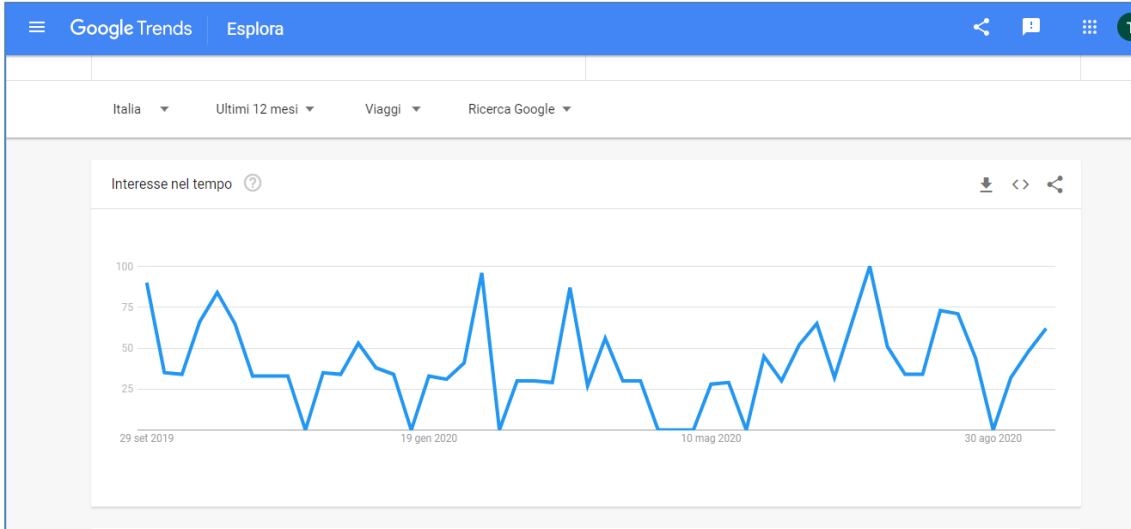


Figure 7 – Predappio Comune Italiano, last 12 months – Travel

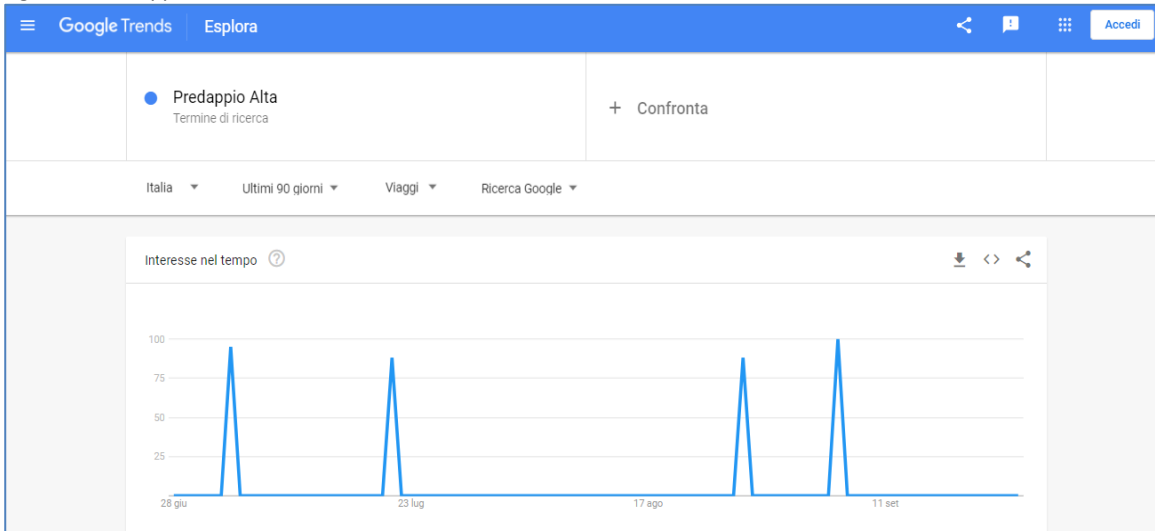


**Predappio Alta**, nestled on a rocky spur, is a fascinating medieval village with a bunch of houses, a square and church, and an old Roman era cave which is nowadays the location of the restaurant and wine cellar "La Vecia Cantena d'la Prè". The history of the village is closely linked to the Fortress built approximately in the 9th-10th century by local feudal lords and owned by the noble Calboli family from Forlì in 909, which had the defence walls constructed. In 1471, Pino Ordelaffi enlarged the fortress and further fortified it to make it impregnable. Today the original structure of the fortress has remained almost unaltered.

With Italians holidaying at home post-lockdown but wary of busy hotspots, the country's historic but often half-empty villages are emerging from the shadows. As social distancing measures mean crowding into traditional hotspots is not allowed, medieval hill villages – remote, uncrowded and rural – have emerged as a handy solution. Unfortunately, **Predappio Alta is blighted by both inadequate infrastructure investment and chronic depopulation, does not have a shop or bar, and needs tourism initiatives to revitalise historic centres and to enhance the villages' governance and business potential.** **LEGGE SALVA BORGHI AGOSTO 2020**

The graph reported in fig. 8 shows the frequency of searched keyword, the geographical area is set at Italy, the time filter is set over the past 3 months with filter category Travel. The graph shows low popularity during all summer 2020, which probably suggests that the Medieval Borgo needs to be promoted and communicated through a multitude of instruments of various kinds, such as strategic plans and programs, territorial and environmental events and tourism marketing projects. Predappio Alta, as many other places in Italy, is a small village (Borgo), a wonderful hidden destination in remote area where physical distancing is more feasible than in big cities and well-known resorts. Now it's the time to start looking in this direction and to look for measures offering incentives to tourists willing to discover these destinations.

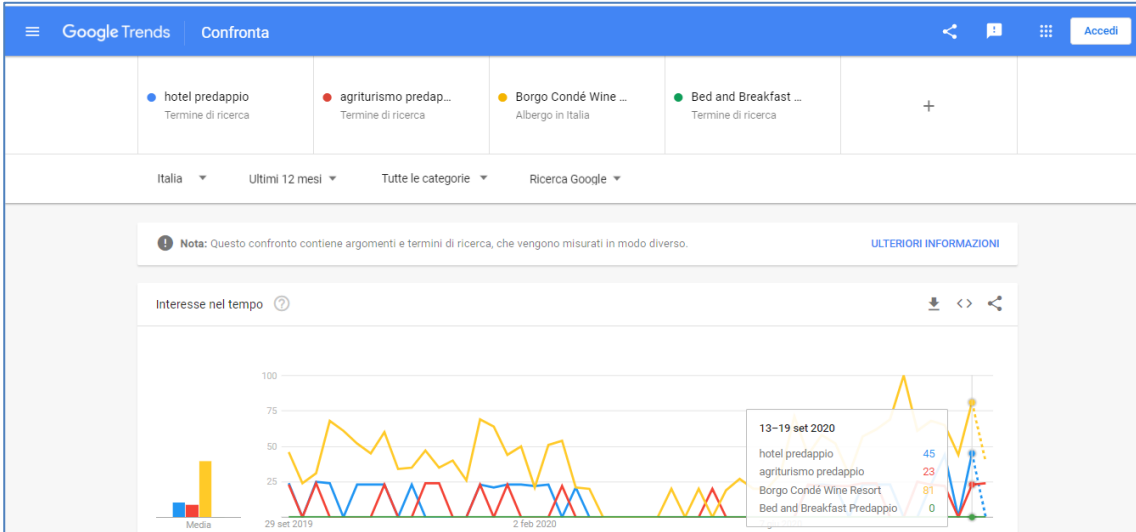
Figure 8- Predappio Alta, last 3 months -Travel



**Hotel Predappio and Agriturismo Predappio**, Italy and worldwide, reveal low popularity both with time filter set at 12 and 3 months while **Borgo Condè Wine Resort** shows popularity both in low season and high season (excluding the lockdown period), with an interesting peak in September 2020 probably due to the promotion of Donnavventura Expedition. **Bed and Breakfast Predappio** did not give back any information as shown in figure 9.

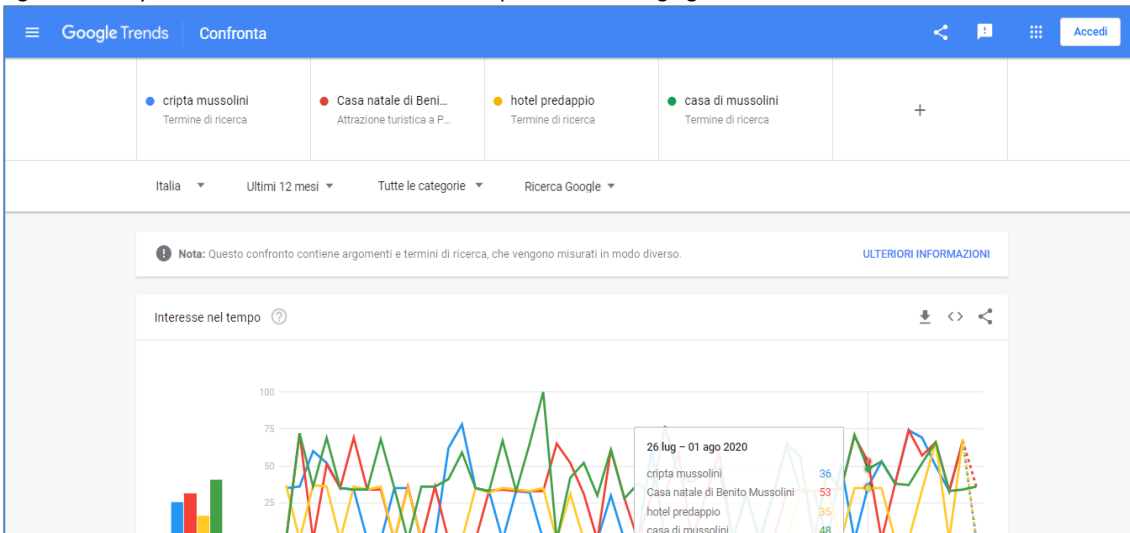
Lodging facilities in Predappio and its surrounding are scarce, and, at present, there are no hotels or accommodation in central Predappio. All lodging facilities, mainly agriturismo or bed and breakfast, are in the countryside and provide few rooms. **Sharing economy**, one of the caterpillars of EXCOVER project, which main benefit is the use of unused resources, **could represent a partial solution to the lack of accommodation in Predappio**. What is broadly known today as the “sharing economy” has expanded accommodation options and technological innovations have made it possible for individuals and ordinary residents to offer rooms to a global marketplace of consumers. Furthermore, growing interest in more authentic experiences by travellers is driving the demand for non-traditional accommodation and closer connections to host communities.

Figure 9 Predappio lodging research



It is interesting to note that the search of keywords as **Cripta Mussolini, Casa Natale di Benito Mussolini** often have the same trend as the keyword Hotel Predappio, which could let to the conclusion that **online visitors might be interested in visiting Predappio and its surrounding for more than one day** as shown in figure 10. It is worth mentioning that keywords related to Mussolini haven't seen a popularity diminish during the months of the lockdown.

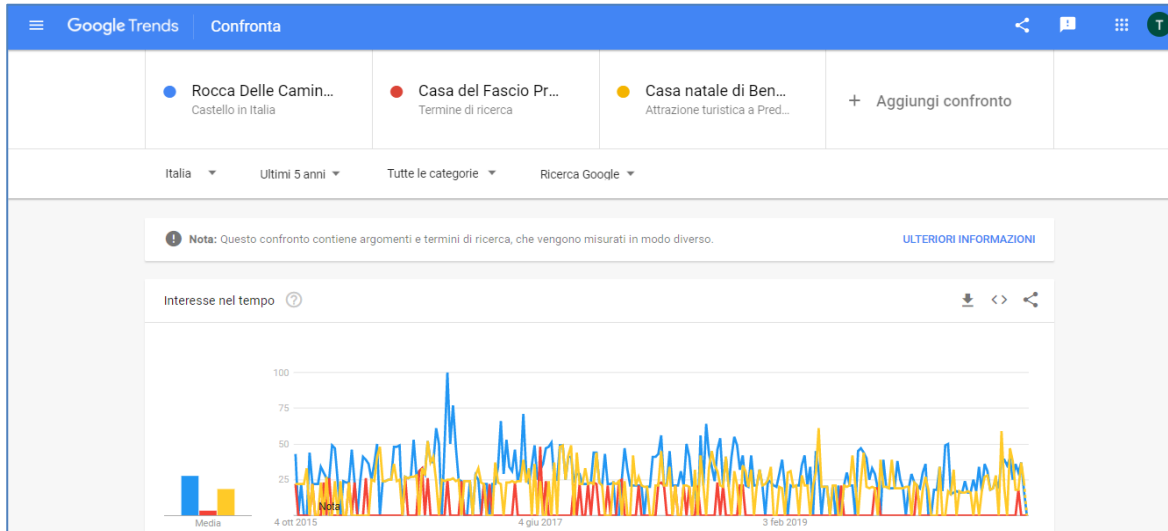
Figure 10 – Keywords related to Mussolini and comparison with lodging research



Both in the last 5 years and last 12 months, a popularity research of keywords Rocca delle Caminate, Casa Natale di Benito Mussolini and Casa del Fascio Predappio demonstrates that Rocca delle Caminate is the most

searched term, in the long and short period, which could suggest that visitors are not only attracted by the Predappio of the twentieth century, but also by other local attractions, as shown in figure 11.

Figure 11- Rocca delle Caminate, Casa Natale di Benito Mussolini and Casa del Fascio Predappio 5 Years trend

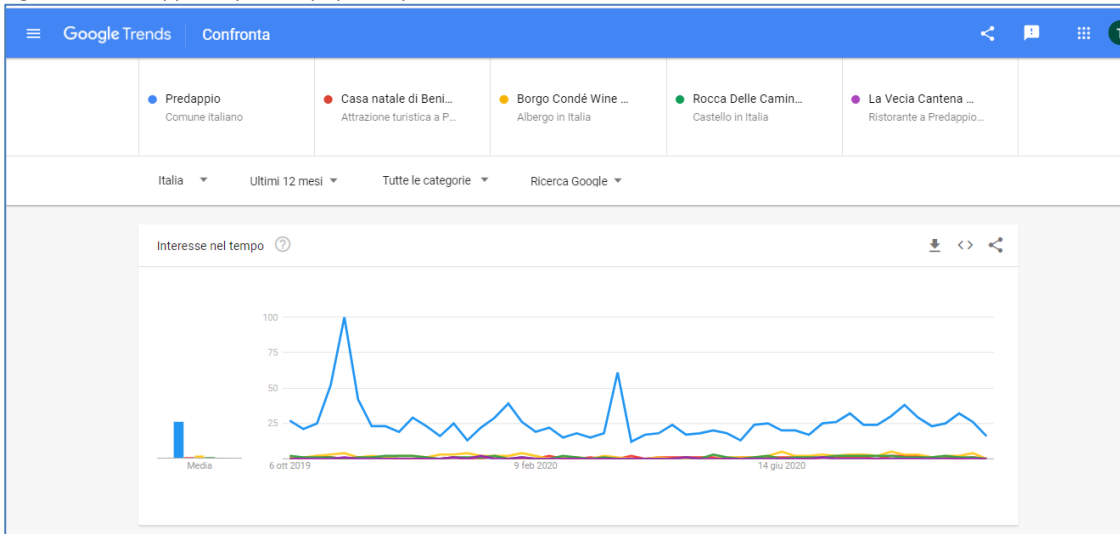


It is also interesting to observe that the popularity of Predappio main attractions didn't grow in the last 5 years.

### 2.3 The geographic distribution of the popularity of Predappio (i.e. local attractions and/or the whole destination popularity against rivals or neighbors).

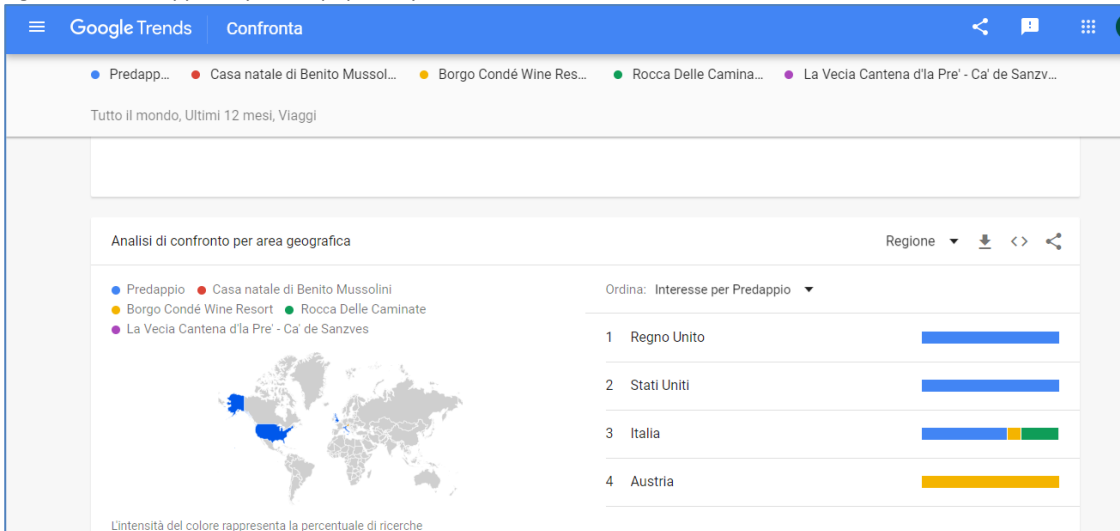
As far as Predappio, the most searched term for “all categories” is **Predappio Comune Italiano** (with an average of 25%), followed by **Borgo Condè Wine Resort** (2%), **Casa Natale di Benito Mussolini** (1%) and **Rocca delle Caminate** (1%). The same research under subcategory “Travels” reveals a higher popularity of Borgo Condè Wine Resort (8%) and Rocca delle Caminate (13%), and a very low popularity for Casa Natale (1%), as shown in fig. 12.

Figure 12- Predappio keywords popularity



In fig. 13 it is illustrated the interest for Predappio worldwide; the term Predappio was searched in United Kingdom, Usa, while Condé is popular in Germany, Austria and Belgium. No interest or popularity worldwide for other keywords, which presented low popularity in Italy as well.

Figure 13 – Predappio keywords popularity worldwide



The interest for Predappio both in Italy and worldwide, in comparison with neighbor locations Bertinoro, Premilcuore and Meldola is reported in fig. 14 (Italy – 5 years – subcategory Travel), 15 (Worldwide 5 years – subcategory Travel) where the graph shows a **wider popularity for Premilcuore**, followed by Bertinoro in terms of searches and geographic distribution. Premilcuore shows a constant attention during summer months, **with an important growth of interest from mid-May until mid-September 2020, with related query - the popular**

terms that often accompany or follow the selected search term – **Premilcuore Cascata**. The map shown in fig. 16 highlights the regions where the interest generated from and it’s noticeable that **Premilcuore received attention from all more regions**.

The data reflect a **very good performance as tourist destination for Premilcuore**, probably due to actions taken from a marketing and communications perspective. In the middle of the Covid 19 pandemic, an off-the-beaten path destination, that travelers can enjoy during these times, represents an opportunity for proximity tourism. Remote destinations are especially appropriate in a pandemic and visitors and tourists have been looking for sublimely isolated destinations more affected than others, with lower risks associated with travel. It has been the summer of regional road trips over far-flung flights, lodging that prioritizes hotels with stringent COVID policies, and private home rentals instead of crowded resorts. Many tourists have chosen close destinations and Premilcuore’s rising associated query is “cascata Premilcuore”.

Figure 14 - Popularity of keyword Predappio in comparison with neighbour locations – 5 years – Category Travel

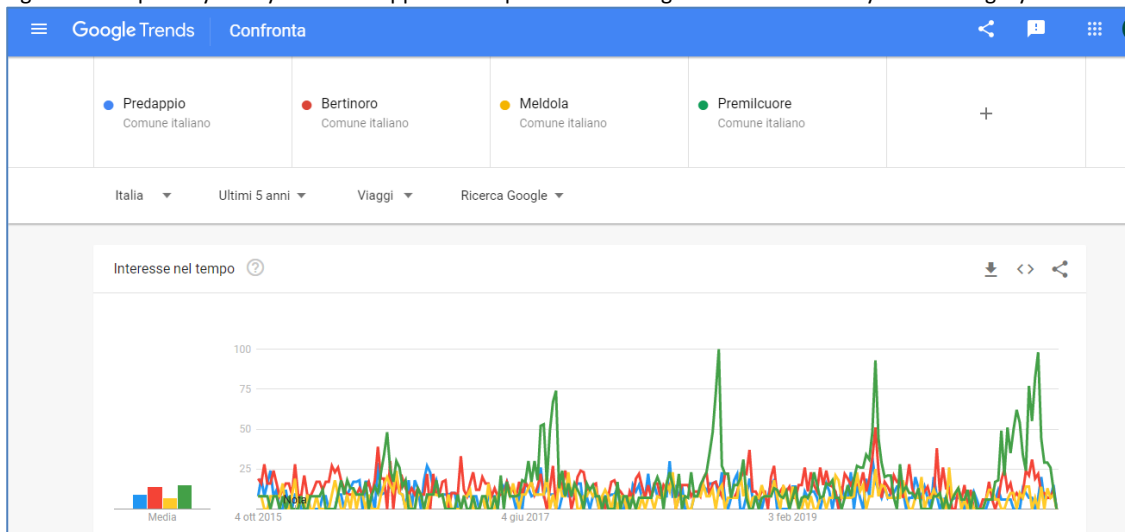




Figure 15 – Worldwide Popularity of keyword Predappio in comparison with neighbour locations – 5 years – Category Travel

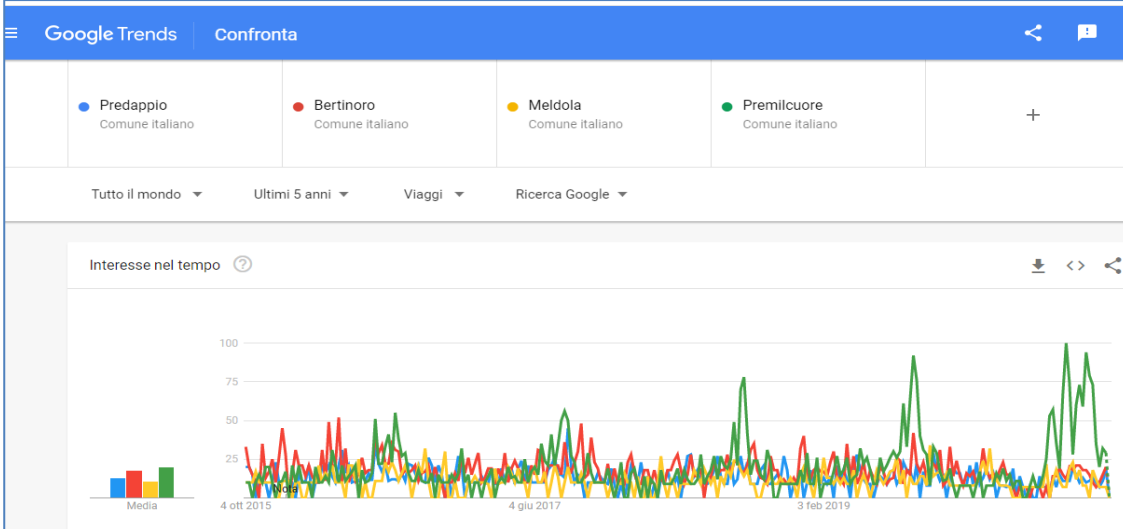


Figure 16 – Regional interest for Predappio, Meldola, Bertinoro, Premilcuore



## 2.4 Top and Rising related queries for Predappio

**(understand what people associates to the destination, its attractions, its rivals or neighbors).**

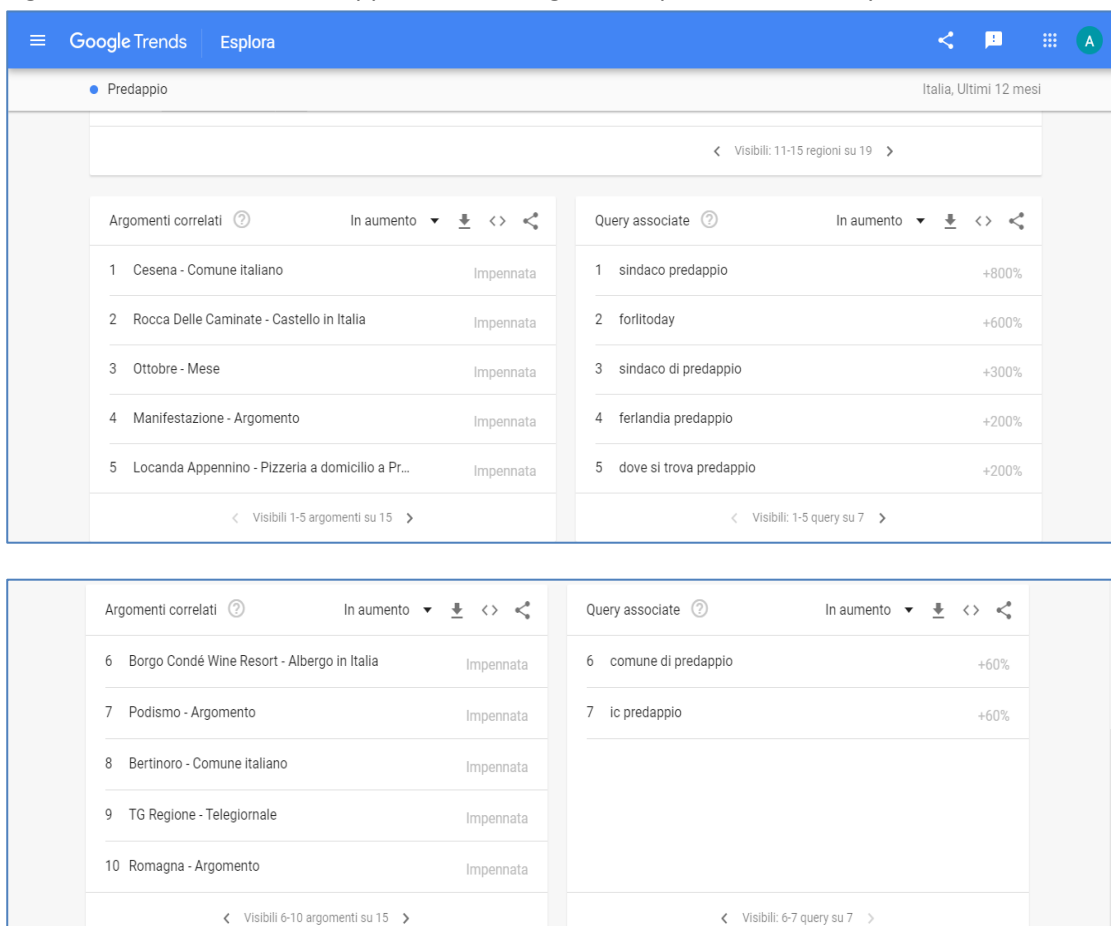
Google Trends can reveal the queries people also search for when they search for the term Predappio. Specifically, people searching for “Predappio” also tend to search for “Rocca delle Caminate”, “Borgo Condè”, “podismo” and “Casa Natale Benito Mussolini”.

Not only does this provide a great opportunity to find more keywords, it also helps you to better understand the needs of your potential customer and their “search journey.”

But you can also go one step further by finding the related searches for the related searches.

The queries related to **Predappio** are the following, as shown in fig. 17:

Figure 17 Predappio rising queries Italy last 12 months



Argomenti correlati	In aumento	Query associate	In aumento
11 Comune Di Predappio - Municipio a Predappio,...	+200%	6 comune di predappio	+60%
12 Sindaco - Argomento	+140%	7 ic predappio	+60%
13 Casa natale di Benito Mussolini - Attrazione tu...	+60%		
14 Provincia di Forlì-Cesena - Provincia italiana	+40%		
15 Istituto Comprensivo di Predappio - Scuola a P...	+40%		

## 2.5 Non searched queries

Fill the table below with terms whose search frequency, in the indicated countries, for the specified categories, was too low for results to be displayed:

Search Term	Categories	Country/Worldwide
Visit Predappio	All	Italy/Worldwide
Predappio bed and breakfas	Travel	Italy
Escursioni Predappio	All/Travel	Italy
Sentieri Predappio	All/travel	Italy
Villa Salta	Travel	Italy
Enoturismo Romagna	Travel	Italy
Architettura Predappio	All	Italy

The lack of searches for the term **Visit Predappio** might be related to a **weak SEO positioning** that needs to be improved. Search engine positioning, or SEO positioning, is a series of techniques and organic search strategies that are used to increase the amount of traffic visiting a website. In order to do this, the techniques and strategies must result in a high ranking when words relating to the website are searched for using search engines such as Google.

**All other above-mentioned unsearched terms denote a lack of interests for alternative activities in Predappio, e.g. WALKING EXCURSIONS AND TOURS, BIKE TOURIMS, NATURE BASED TOURISM, WELLNESS TOURISM, WINE AND FOOD TOURISM and ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE TOURS.**

Needless to say, that Predappio, which attracts thousands of day visitors every year, has the potential, due to its surroundings, its food, wine and enchanted hills, to develop services, initiatives and products to meet the needs of a new and attentive tourist, proposing a wide range of options and opportunities that embraces an entire and well-defined territory along which wineries, vineyards, architectures, art, rural agglomerations, accommodation facilities and environmental and naturalistic resources can be visited and enjoyed.

When it comes to enhancing a touristic destination, it must be considered that a territorial resource, in order to fully express its attractive potential, recalling a constant and relatively consistent tourist flow, must also be known at the time when tourism decisions mature and the process of evaluating alternative destinations begins. This means that the enhancement of a tourist resource cannot be separated from the adoption of a communication strategy that highlights its specificity and emphasizes its attractive potential.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Many online researches related to Predappio reflect a concentration of popularity for terms and keywords connected with historical characters and facts, which led us to affirm that Predappio's reputation is strongly related to Mussolini, but also terms as Rocca delle Caminate and Borgo Condè Wine Resort return interesting data.

The results of the data analysis present Rocca delle Caminate as the most popular keyword in comparison with nearby Rocche, with highest popularity on weekends, while nearby Rocche show a slight interest for all the searched period, which correspond to last summer.

Setting the filter category "Travels" and exploring the last 90 days (Jul-Sep), it is interesting to note that the term Predappio was explored particularly on Fridays and Saturdays, which suggests the intention of potential visitors to visit the place on weekends. Unfortunately, lodging facilities in Predappio and its surrounding are scarce, and, at present, there are no hotels or accommodation in central Predappio. All lodging facilities, mainly agritourism or bed and breakfast, are in the countryside and provide few rooms.

**Sharing economy**, one of the caterpillars of EXCOVER project, which main benefit is the use of unused resources, **could represent a partial solution to the lack of accommodation in Predappio.**

In general, the exploration of the keyword Predappio, set with time filter over the last 12 month, shows more searches and a consequent peak in popularity at the end of October, 9-15 February, 15-21 march and 12-18 July, and a fair popularity from 9th to 22nd August.

The terms whose search frequency displayed low popularity or were too low for results to be displayed, as Predappio Alta (low popularity) and Visit Predappio, Bed and Breakfast Predappio, Escursioni Predappio, denote the need to identify all local resources, to organize the various components of the natural and the built environment (hills, churches, castles, monuments and so on), together with the set of immaterial resources, such as local culture or brands and even human resources, in order to have a complete picture of all the tourist resources within a given local system. (WP4.1) and subsequently to develop primary tourism products to attract tourists to Pedappio. At least a strategic management approach must be adopted as a guideline for tourism planning, and implementation of tourism products along with the increase of tourism promotion and marketing.

What is the concerned location's reputation like? How does it change in different times and places? How can it impact tourists' intention to visit and more in general tourist flows? Which are the strengths and the

weaknesses of the concerned location in reputational terms, thinking at sustainable tourism development?

How can the weaknesses be addressed?

What does this analysis teach about the perception of the location image? Is it viewed as a tourism destination or as what? What does it suggest for future marketing and communication strategies?

Discuss the most relevant/unexpected findings in relation to sustainable tourism development, focusing on the comparison with neighboring and rival destinations.

### 3. Visitors survey analysis

While Google Trends provide information about the reputation of Predappio with the general public of internet users, only tourists can form a reputation based on the actual experience of the destination. Interviewing tourists in Predappio is also crucial to understand how the reputation of Predappio as tourism destination configures, which aspects of the local supply affect the overall reputation positively and which ones have a negative impact.

The reputation measurement model employed for this survey is a version of the Reputation Quotient adapted to tourism destinations, developed to the aims of EXCOVER. The model considers the reputation of a destination with tourists as composed by 5 main dimensions: emotional appeal; destination image and management; heritage, climate, products and services (quality); workers attitude, social responsibility. These are theoretical constructs, measured through indicators (survey questions) able to catch their constitutive factors from the eyes of a tourist. For example, tourists do not experience the local welfare directly, but can get an idea of its level from the impressions he got from hospitals, schools, public services etc. Beside indicators, the questionnaire contains questions about the socio-demographic and trip-related characteristics of the tourists, their overall satisfaction and extent to which his expectations about the destination were fulfilled.

The structured survey questionnaires were submitted to 75 tourists visiting Predappio, through face-to-face interviews carried out from 09<sup>th</sup> of July to 8<sup>th</sup> of August. Results offer helpful insights and provide important suggestions about destination management strategies and tourism development actions.

The graphs reported in fog. 18 illustrate the **general demographic aspects and travel motivations** of people interviewed in Predappio during the summer and provide an overview of the key demography characteristics. Demographic segmentation involves dividing the market into groups that are identifiable in terms of physical and factual data. The demographic variables may include; age, gender, income, occupation, marital status, family size, race, religion and nationality. These segmentation methods are a popular way of segmenting the customer markets, as the demographic variables are relatively easy to measure.

All interviewed visitors originate from Italy, except one tourist from Germany. The low presence of foreign tourists is certainly due to Covid 19 emergency and restrictions, which has caused a huge diminishing of foreign presences in Italy during the summer.

33.33% of visitors (25 in number) come from Emilia Romagna, which suggests that, always due to Covid Emergency, many people choose to visit close-to-home or proximity destinations as an alternative to classic vacations. Visitors from Lombardia represent 21.33% (16 in number), followed by Lazio with 12% of presences. Even if this is very superficial analysis, it suggests **the need to monitor a long term strategy trend of visitors' region or country of origin in order to realize targeted promotion campaign** where marketing efforts can be

focused by developing the most effective message in the cities-regions-countries from which the highest number of visitors comes from.

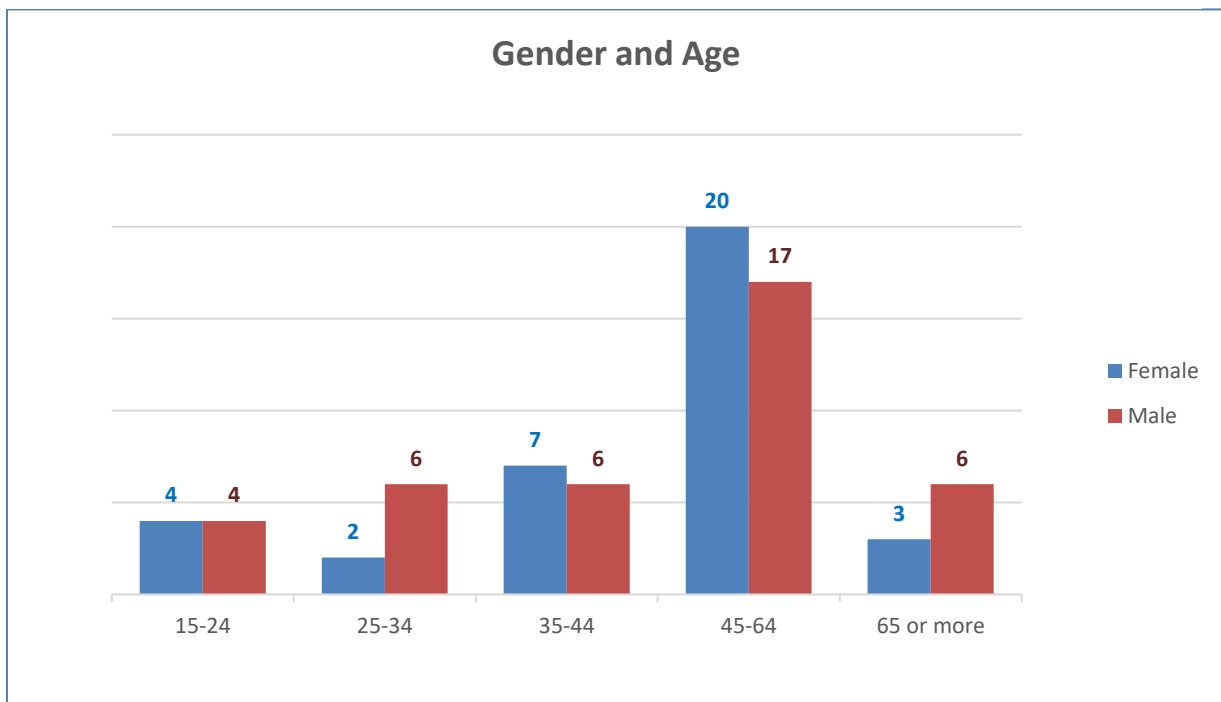
Age is also another common factor used to segment customers and plays an important role in where and how to market tourism products as **different age groups have different values, norms, and ways they interpret messages**. Age is also helpful when deciding which social platform is best to use as every social media platform has an age group that uses it more than others.

In our case, out of 75 surveys, the overall descriptive statistics shows that most tourists were between the **ages of 45 and 64 (49.3%)** and less than 20% were covered by younger tourists (15-24 yrs.). The gender distribution showed that equivalence of males and females. Over 48% of all tourists are employed.

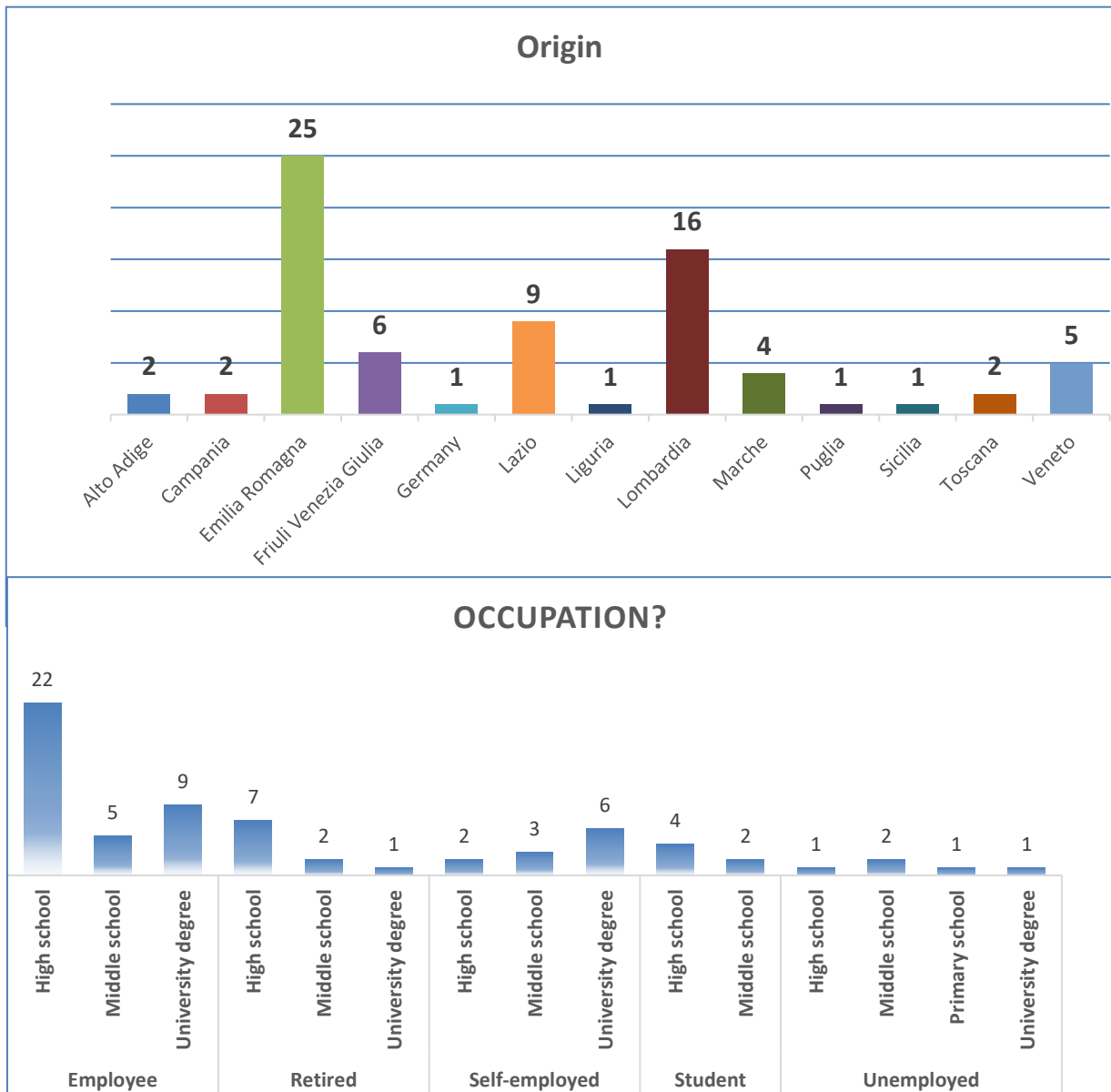
Culture is the main reason for visiting Predappio, followed by visits to friends and relatives and day excursions from the beach.

This evidence provides implications for the diversification of primary tourism offering more diverse products, which potentially adds value by broadening the experiences

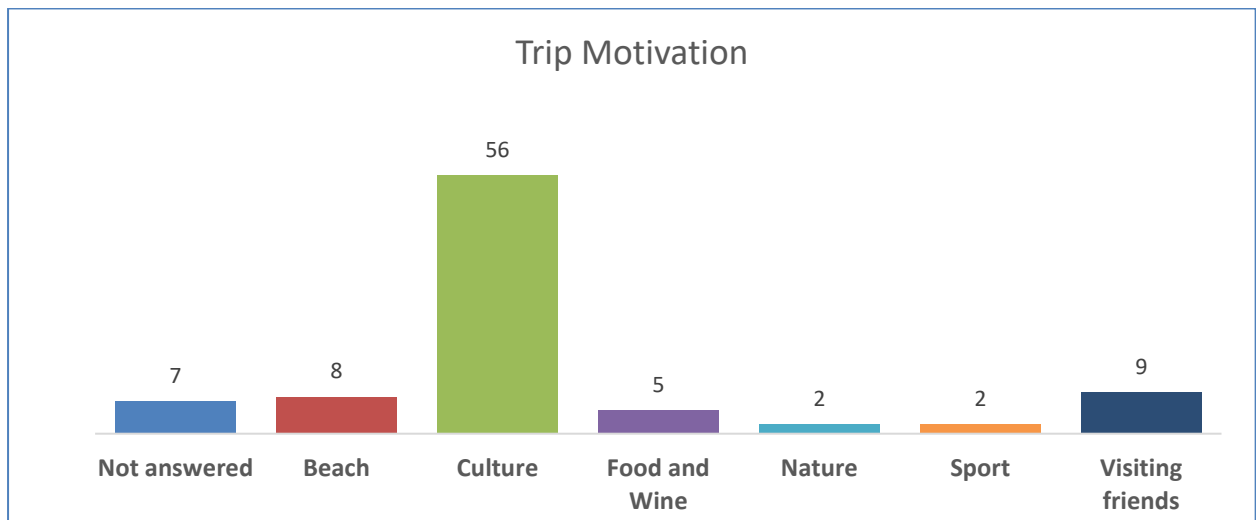
Figure 18 Demographic aspects and travel motivations



of existing tourists at the destination or attracting different types of tourists who might not otherwise have visited Predappio. Culture is Predappio’s **primary tourism product** which attract tourists and visitors. The diversification, intensification and linkage of this product to Wine and Food Products or Nature Based Products is crucial for the competitiveness and sustainable development of the destination.







### 3.1 The Emotional Appeal of Predappio

The bar chart reported in fig. 19 shows the emotional dimension experienced by tourists and visitors involved in the interview process. The **relax dimension is the most praised one**, followed by the excitement dimension. Summer 2020 was denoted by Covid 19 health emergency that has really changed everything about travel — between grounded flights and changing travel restrictions. In order to avoid crowds and larger cities, in a critical phase of health emergency, people have been rediscovering proximity destinations, especially quick, local getaways for 2 to 3 days, which are a great way to test the travel waters again and get a much needed change of scenery while staying close to home. For this reason, the relax dimension might be related to the quietness and tranquility of Predappio, located far and away from the bustling of the city life, from traffic and pollution, a perfect place to maintain social distancing.

Many isolated and countryside destinations are seeing their remote seclusion as a selling point in anxious times and, if social distancing is going to be part of life from now on, isolated and safe destinations have to push the gas pedal and create campaigns offering tranquil imagery in order to stand out from equally secluded competitors.

The **excitement dimension** is probably related to the curiosity of visiting the birth- place of the man who transformed the Italian political system into an authoritative totalitarian regime for some visitors, and/or to the need of relating to and establishing a dialogue with the past in order to become part of the social making of these places for some other visitors.

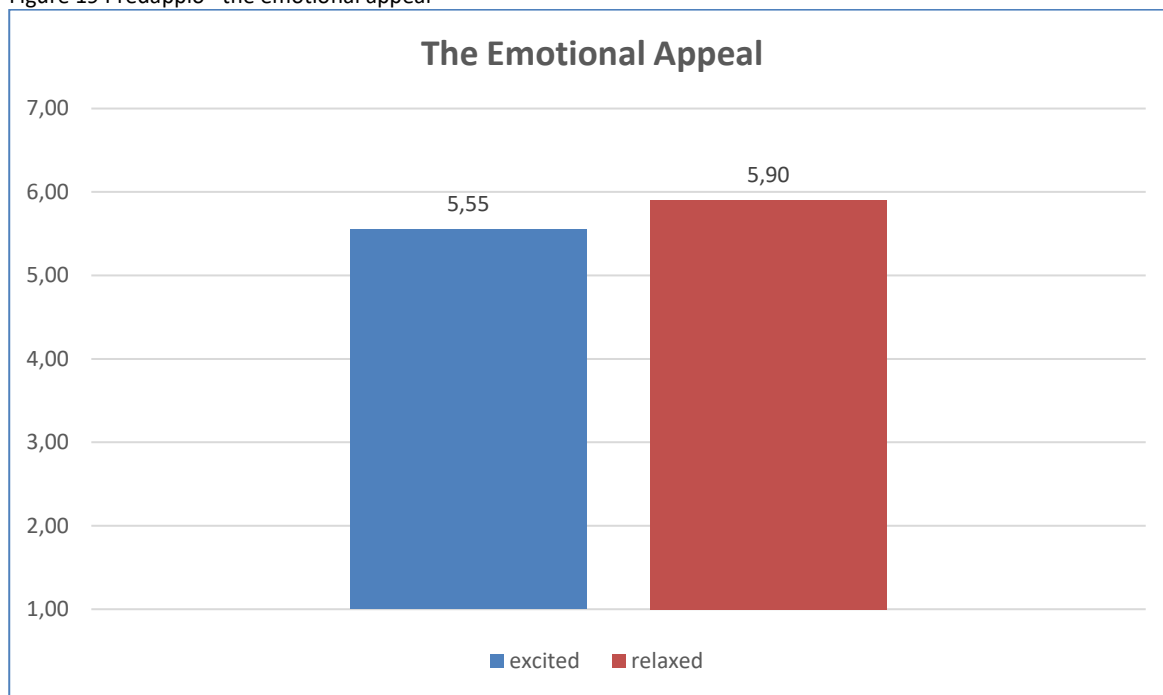
It is important to underline that tourists are interested in witnessing the past difficult heritage sites as **individuals actively seeking to be part of a larger history**. They actualize the past in the present, using the

distinctive typology that Gumbrecht (Gumbrecht, 2004) proposes between a ‘meaning culture’ and a ‘presence culture’, the latter having the body as a dominant point of self-reference and considering the body to be part of a cosmology.

The idea of witnessing can be considered as a performance of testimony through which relations to past events are reconfirmed, created and/or transformed. To stress the performative character of testimony means stressing that the dialogue with the past is one of embodiment where past events are felt and worked through physically.

On the contrary, tourists who did not feel relaxed or excited might be displeased of visiting a place associated with totalitarianism and dark chapters of Italian history.

Figure 19 Predappio– the emotional appeal



Tourists and visitors visiting Predappio for Wine and Food motivation represent the category with higher score referred to relax and excitement, followed by visitors with cultural purposes, while tourists visiting for reasons related to the natural environment have the lower score, both for excitement and relax, as reported in fig. 20. The ratio relax dimension/ excited dimension and food and wine tourists might be related to the fact that wine tourism services offer experiences which are delivered in an exciting but also comfortable and authentic atmosphere. It’s also important to underline that wine producers in Predappio are very professional and play a fundamental role in making the visit a success.

Nevertheless, Wine Tourism is multi-faceted and comprises a wide gamut of activities which are experienced during tourists' visits to wineries and wine producing regions and includes wine appreciation, the combination of gastronomy, consumption and sale of local traditional products, exposure to and enjoyment of the natural environment and vineyard work, day trips or longer stays, many additional cultural or eco-tourism activities and an introduction to the local community, its history and way of life.

To develop its full potential as a wine tourism destination and to improve its image and increase its recognition, Predappio should put in place measures from the hardware point of view (landscape, cultural heritage, etc.) and from the software point of view (services, utilities, etc) together with the contribution of local institutions and communities in particular, combined with the entrepreneurial energy of the local wine producers, in order to provide the impetus for the further development of wine tourism.

Tourists visiting the destinations for nature could be influenced by the lack of any tourism development strategy and action plan, which should be implemented to offer visitors choices and opportunities to discover Predappio Natural Environment as signaled walking and biking trails and paths, guided tours with qualified nature guides, access for disabled, picnic facilities, maximise the potential of underutilized natural resources of the region etc.

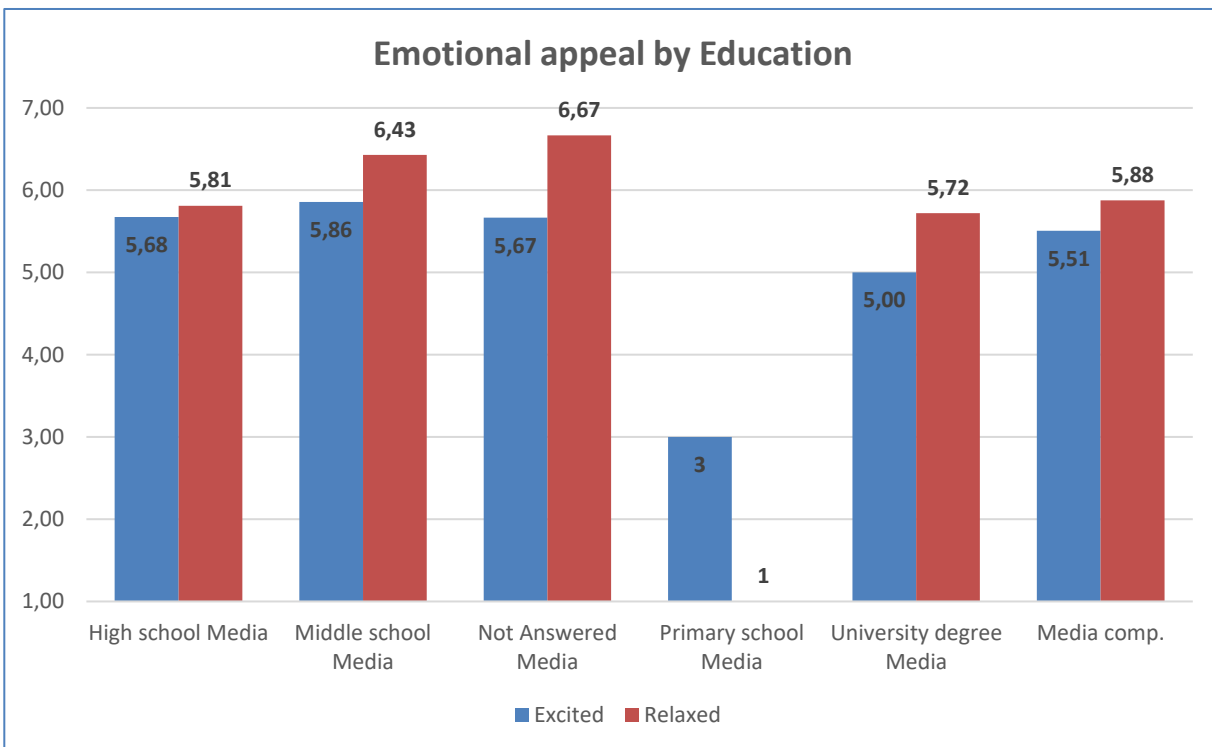
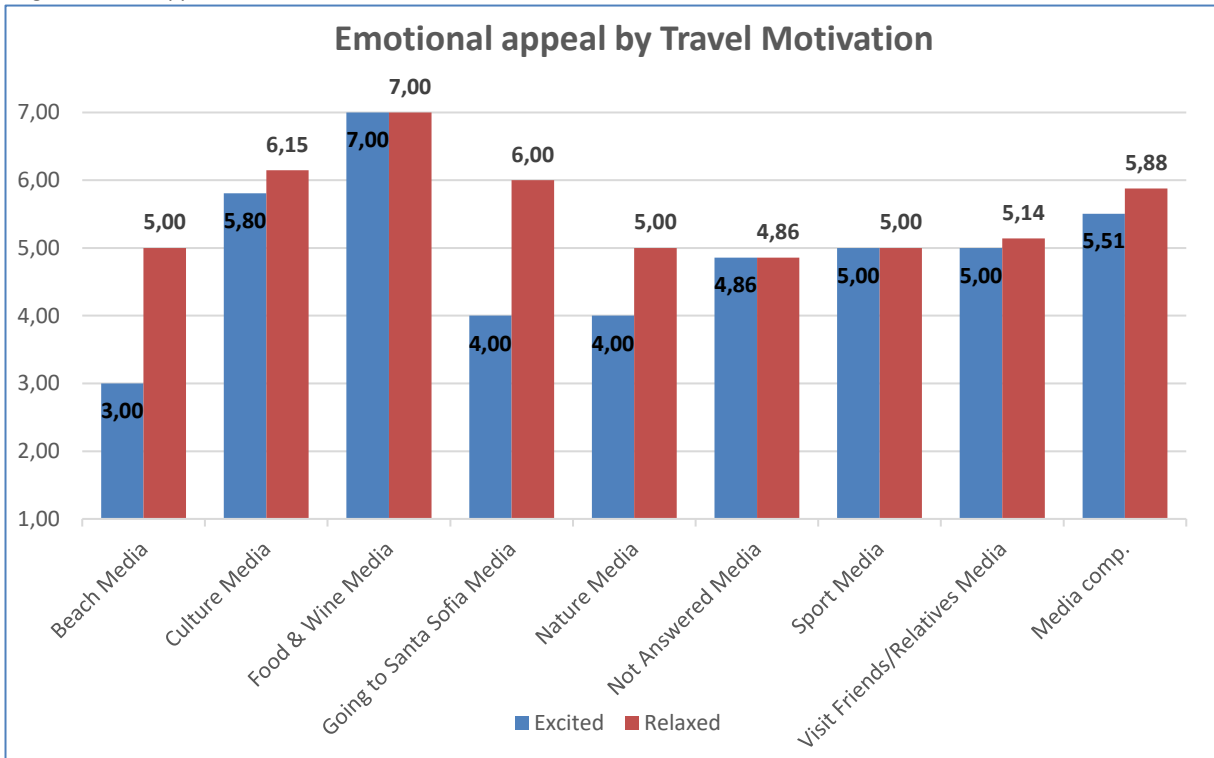
The low excitement reported by visitors motivated by cultural purpose might be related to the fact that many attractions are closed, as Cripta Mussolini, Casa Del Fascio, Rocca di Predappio Alta, while other attractions, as Rocca delle Caminate and Santa Rosa are opened only on Saturdays and Sundays. It must be considered that during summer months, especially In August, Predappio is visited every day and not only on weekends and, consequently, all tourist attractions should be accessible.

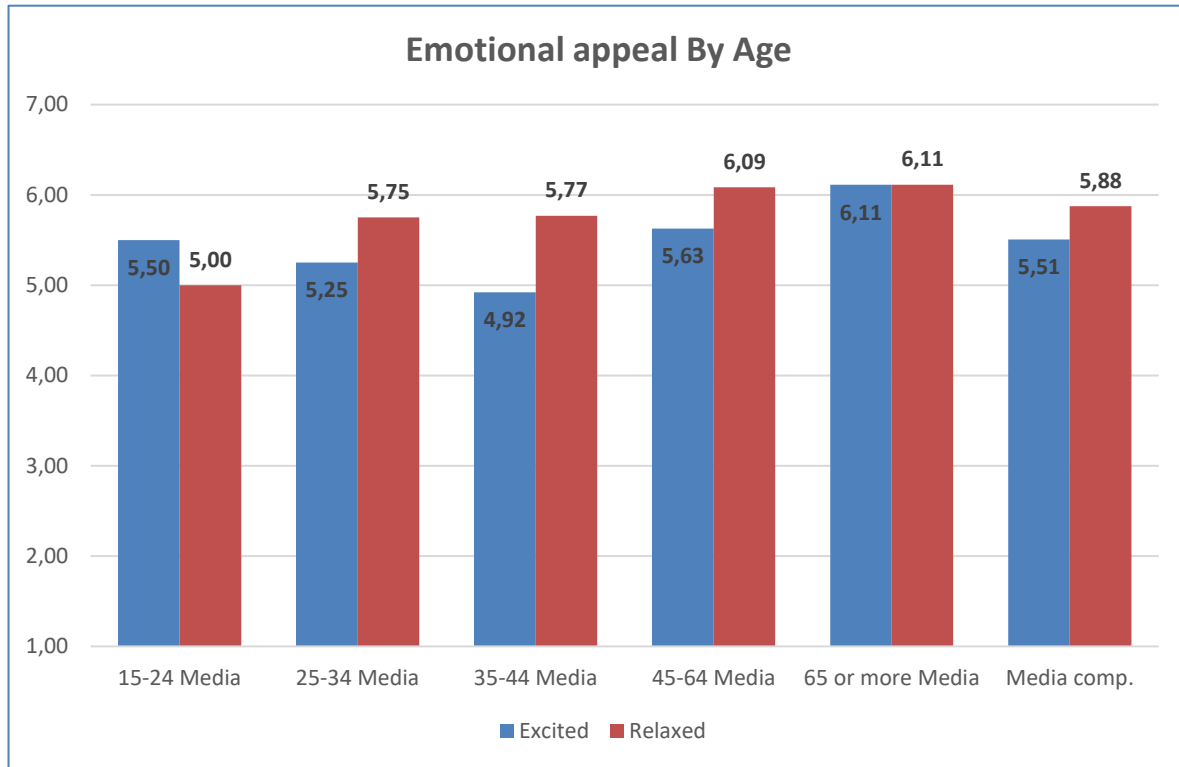
Tourists with beach motivations do not seem to appraise the excitement, probably because their main travel motivation are more related to different activities and, arriving in Predappio for a Day trip, they do not find services and proposals to enjoy their excursion.

The enhancement of natural heritage and the accessibility of different attractions will encourage tourists to stay longer and spend more, enticed by the availability of different local cultural, natural and heritage experiences.

The average rate of visitors based on age and education is quite similar, with a slight difference for senior visitors, who appear the most excited and relax ones, while people with primary education express very low judgement for both dimensions.

Figure 20 Predappio - level of relax/excitement and travel motivation





### 3.2 Predappio Image and destination Management

Predappio perception of image, marketing, security and transports is reported in fig. 21. Transports and accessibility are the data with higher rate (6,31), probably because Predappio is located very close to Forlì and the access road is well signaled and usually with no traffic congestion.

This data is of great importance because, although transportation is one of the bases of tourism, which takes place in various transport sectors that connect destinations, the connection between the development of transport and tourism is probably underestimated. **The means of transport and transport route selection by the service user have great significance when it comes to choosing a destination** and the efficiency of transport and growth of tourism strongly influence each other. Even if favourable accessibility itself does not necessarily represent an origin of competitiveness, it plays a pivotal role in selecting tourist destinations as tourists during their travel decisions select the destinations to be reached first based on the local possibilities and attractions and successively compare them by accessibility. Thus, accessibility primarily has or can theoretically have a role in substituting potentially destinations. On the contrary, destinations capable of

providing comparative advantages for tourists can attract a significant number of visitors even if with relatively unfavourable accessibility.

Consequently, the matter of accessibility is relevant for destinations with similar endowments.

Safety and security follow transports, with a rate of 5,8, which could suggest that visitors and tourists do not feel perfectly safe in Predappio.

Mean ratings related to **image and marketing activities are the lowest**, with image at 5.4, followed by marketing at 5.3.

Image of a destination is based on the perceptions of individuals about the destination, which determines their touristic behaviour and, consequently, their choice of destination; image is based on positive and/or negative associations which are key elements at the basis of an evaluation or a selection process that can provide the link between the motivations and choices of destinations.

For sure Predappio' image is inevitably connected with Mussolini's figure and the history of the fascist's movement and therefore it is possible to distinguish, among visitors who choose to visit Predappio, the nostalgic ones and culturally motivated educational tourists. On the other side, Predappio' image strictly connected with fascism exclude the visit of those who associate the destination with fascism ideology and dark chapters of recent history.

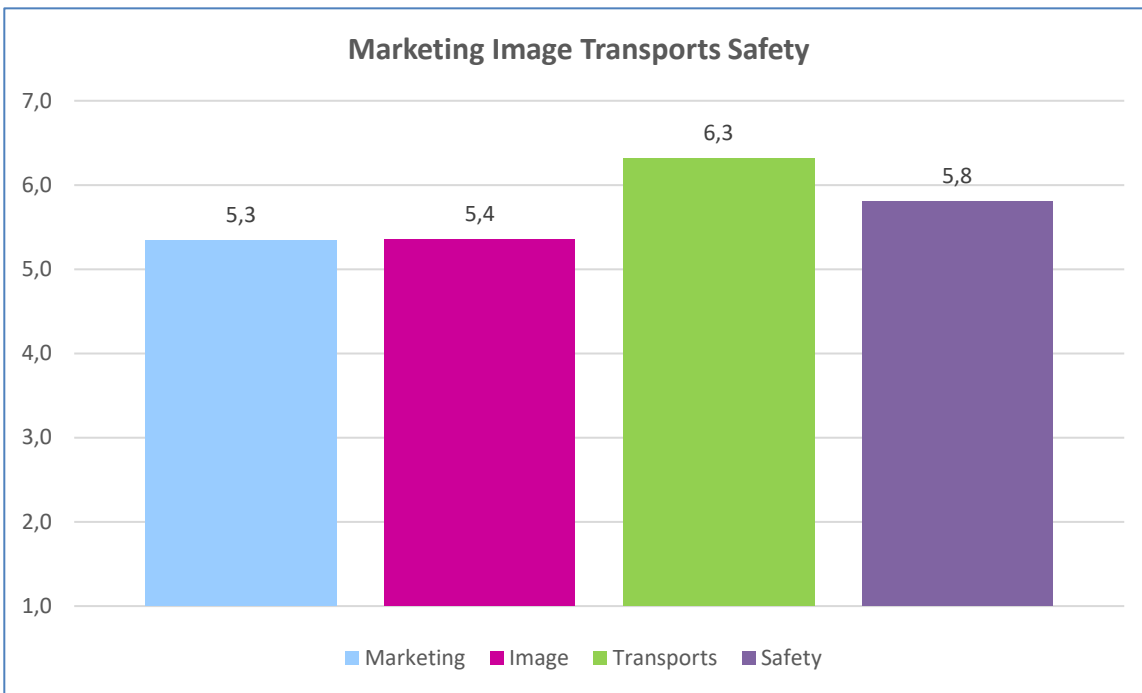
In order to improve a negative image and/or to attract different clusters of visitors, Predappio could follow the theoretical constructs of image repair, image restoration and recovery marketing, even if modifying or changing the consolidated image of a destination is very difficult.

As a matter of fact, it can be affirmed that **Predappio is a dark tourism destination and a recent study by John Lennon affirms that the crypt and other attractions in Predappio that catalyse visitors, do not provide historical record or serve to educate individuals about the regime and its crimes. Rather they subvert historically reality and reinforce an inaccurate and dangerously misleading perspective on this dark period of Italian history** (Lennon, 2020).

There is a wide body of literature regarding dark tourism and the different approaches to transform a voyeuristic destination in an educational destination and other ethical issues. (Lennon, Dark Tourism, 2017) (Light, 2017). The concepts of destination image and destination marketing and branding are closely interrelated, and the ultimate goal of any destination should be to influence possible tourists' travel related decision making and choice through marketing activities. Consequently, tourism destination marketing is considered one of the most influential means of increasing numbers of visitors to a destination and maintaining stays within a destination.

Unfortunately the perception of destination marketing and communication initiatives is quite low and it might be related to the absence of a destination marketing strategy that should provide a common point of reference for all local activities and organizations, ensure a disciplined approach to marketing and a continuous coordinated set of activities associated with efficient distribution of products to high potential markets.

Figure 21 Predappio- perception of image, marketing, safety and transports

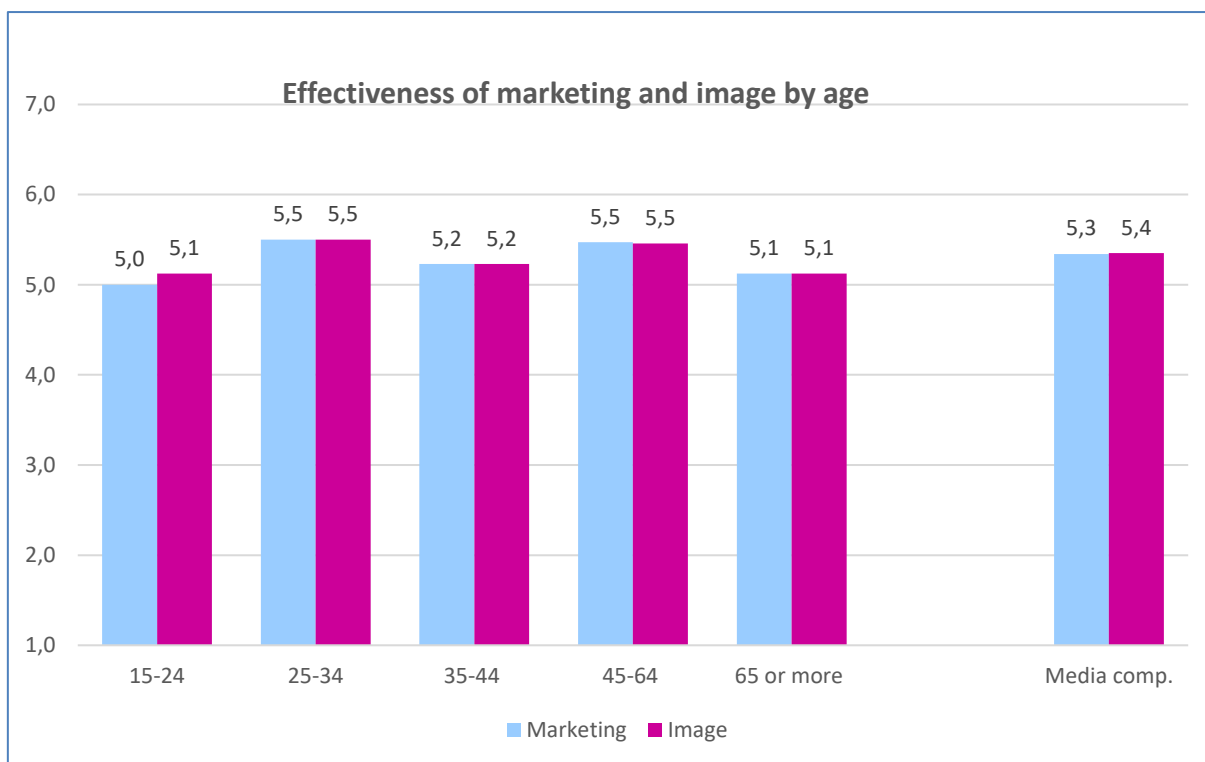


People with middle school education consider marketing and communication activities more effective than visitors with higher and lower education level, but in general the mean rating is very low, probably due to the lack of a systematic and integrated marketing strategy, as reported in fig. 27. **Younger visitors are the ones that attribute the lower rate to marketing initiatives** shown in fig. 23. Due to their familiarity with technologies, young people mainly use digital sources to gather travel information and plan their holidays and they often choose to spend money on unique and authentic experiences and are influenced more by online media than offline media. Several researches and studies indicated that young **people have different information seeking patterns when planning a trip. They dominantly consider internet and collect other tourist experiences and to find information about holiday or destination and for them it is important to read first-hand experience** of a destination and find out how destination impressed other tourists reading opinions and comments found on web sites like TripAdvisor and through social media. So, marketing managers in a tourist destination must be aware that pre-trip planning is equally important as services they provide in a destination, where comments as well as experiences from others contribute to shape the perception of future visitors.

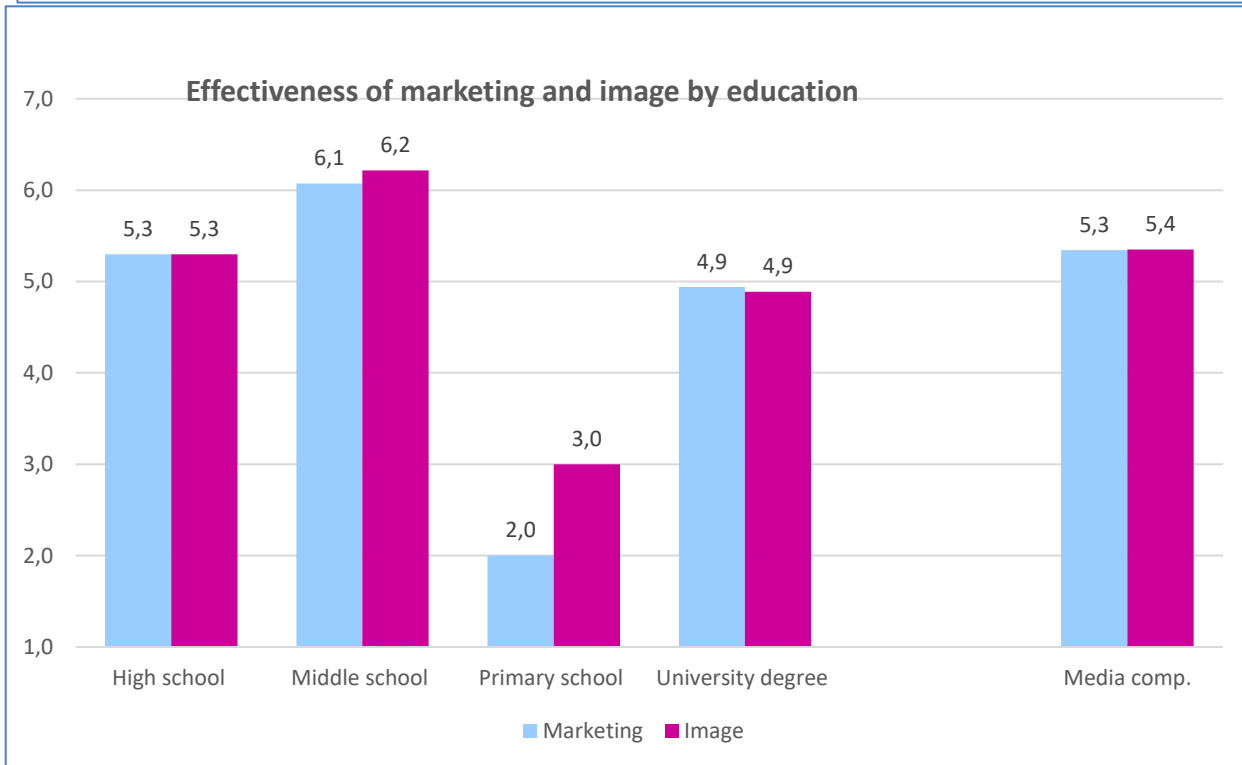
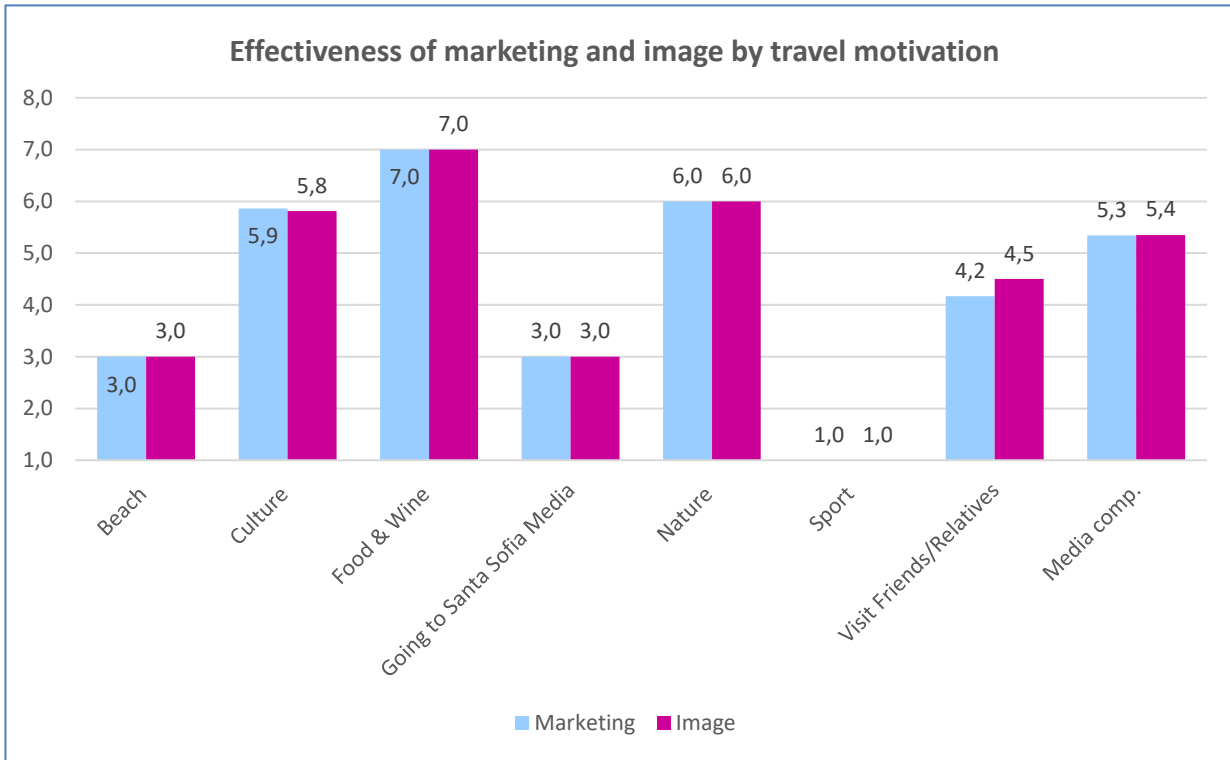
As far as trip motivation, visitors that choose Predappio for **Wine and Food purposes, declare to be very satisfied with marketing and image effectiveness**, which is probably connected with the individual self-promotion and advertising carried out by Sangiovese Wine producers, confirmed by a quick research on the WWW and on social networks, while **tourists visiting the destination for sports and day trippers from the beach**

**declare to be very unsatisfied by marketing and image.** The first ones probably are influenced by the lack of offer and proposal related to activities such as bike paths, walking and hiking trails, the difficulty in finding online and offline maps of accessible paths and the absence of a section dedicated to sports and free time on Predappio official touristic website. In a comparison with neighbor locations as Premilcuore and Santa Sofia, it emerges that both official websites provide information and suggestions for walking itineraries (<http://www.visitsantasofia.it/it/a-spasso/>), walking, biking and on horses itineraries (<http://www.turismopremilcuore.it/sport-e-tempo-libero/itinerari/>) and sport fishing (<http://www.turismopremilcuore.it/sport-e-tempo-libero/pesca-sportiva/>).

Figure 22 Predappio – Perception of marketing and image by age, travel motivations and education



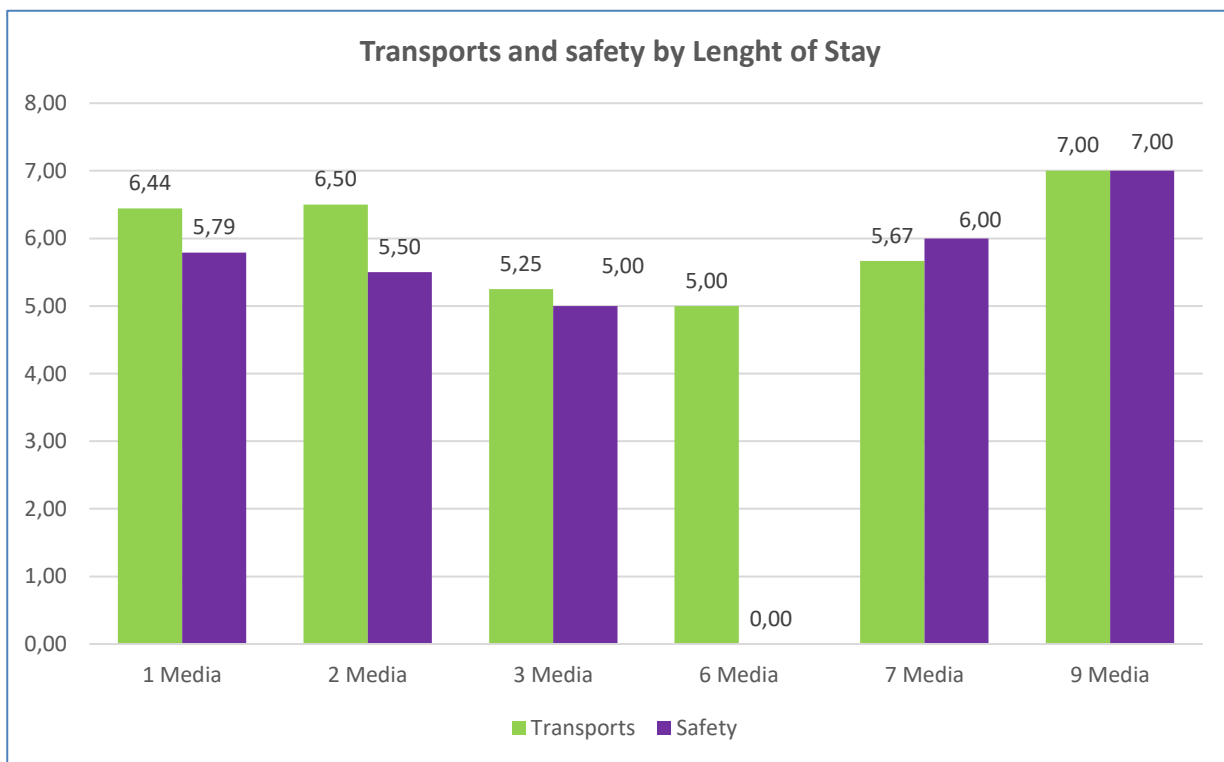




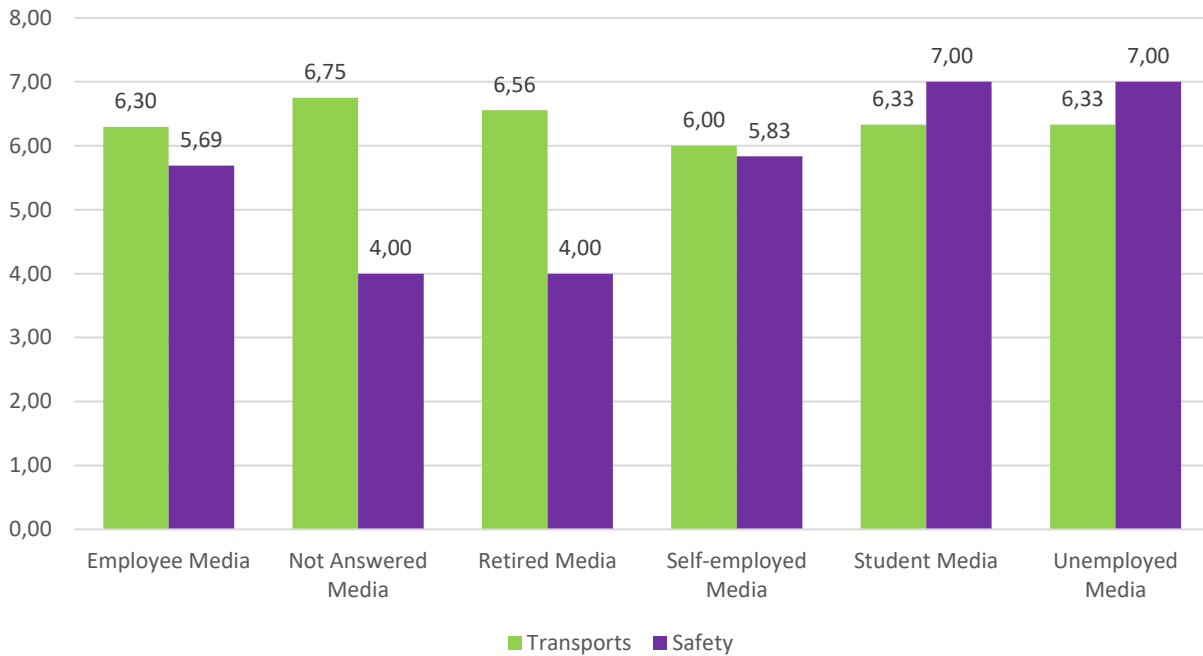
The respondents' perception of transports, accessibility and mobility and of safety and security related to travel motivations is very high for transports with a value of 6.3, while security and safety reports a value of 5.8 as showed in fig. 24. Predappio is perceived as reasonably safe and secure, mostly by students, while retired people have a negative perception of security with a rate of 4.

Transport and accessibility system are considered efficient by one day visitors (6.44) and two days visitors (6.50), while low satisfaction could be presumably connected to the limited number of trains from and to both destinations.

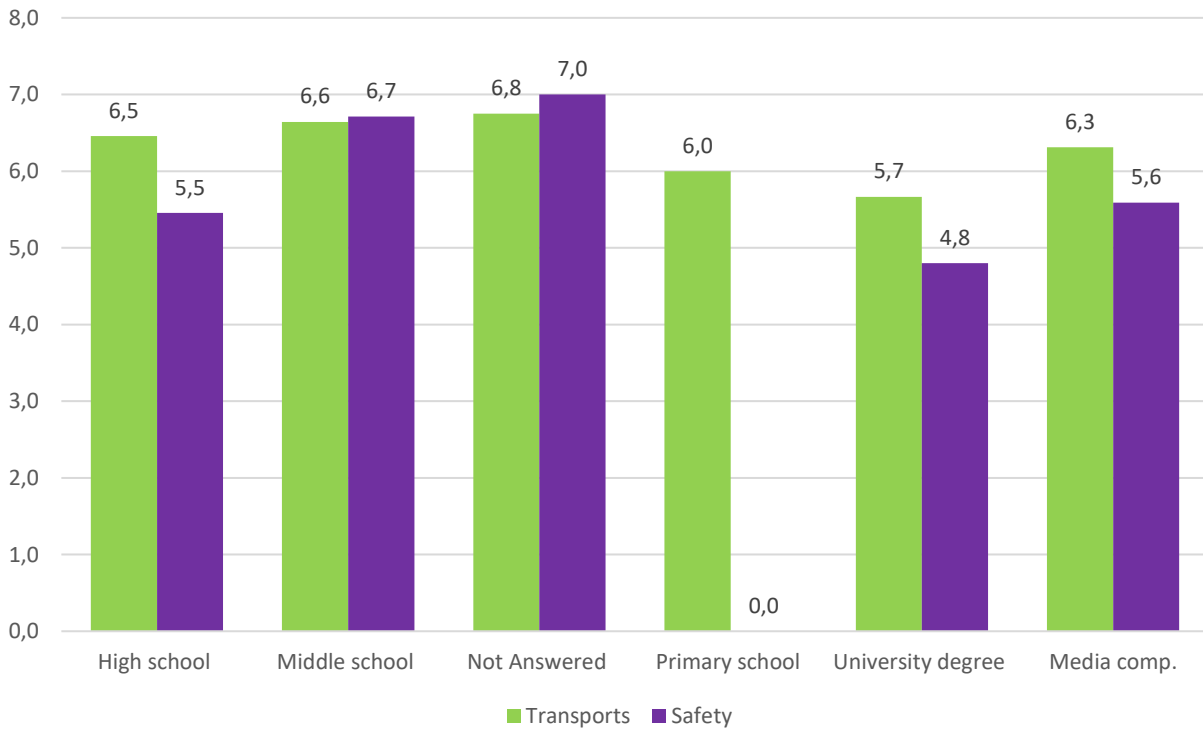
Figure 23 Predappio – Transports and safety by length of stay, education and occupation



### Transports and Safety by Occupation



### Transports and safety by Education



### 3.3 The quality of products and services and heritage in Predappio

The following graph in fig. 25 reports the general evaluation of products, heritage and services in Predappio. **Cultural heritage is the most praised element** with a very high rating (6.3), followed by natural heritage (6.2), restauration services (5.9) and accommodation and lodging (5.5).

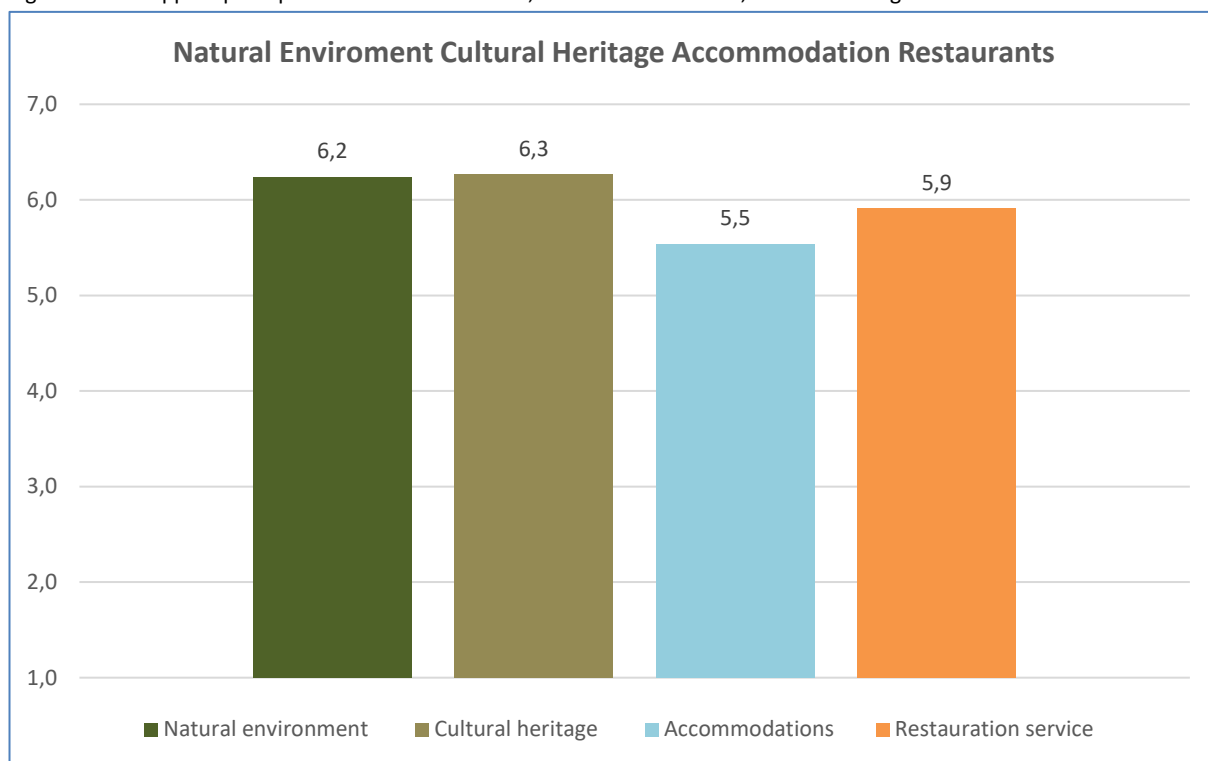
Predappio is mostly appreciated for cultural heritage, which is naturally connected with the cultural and historical legacy of this destination. Besides the attractors related to Fascism, there are **many other elements of cultural and historical interest** as old Romanic churches (Sant 'Agostino and San Cassiano), the old and unfortunately in ruins Rocca d'Elmici, the precious Rocca and the small Borgo of Predappio Alta, the presence of paintings and ceramics of Mastrolupo, scattered around town, just to mention a few. The long list of potential and interesting attractors related to cultural heritage, as mentioned above, demonstrates that Predappio has the characteristic to retain visitors for more than one day, in order to visit all the interesting sites offered by the territory and should therefore also broadening its offer by developing new products for tourists and promoting both the primary elements of destination appeal and the secondary elements which might be attractive and will allow visitors to stay longer.

Tourists and visitors are also very satisfied by the natural environment, while restaurants and lodging and accommodation show a lower level of satisfaction.

Even if Predappio has a good offer of typical restaurants, serving local and typical food, tourists and visitors do not fully appreciate it. The **not positive perception of restaurants in Predappio** is quite surprising as Romagna is well known for its distinctive culinary traditions. Even if food is not the primary motivation for visiting, **the culinary experience impacts the happiness regarding the stay and in some cases, can influence the destination choice**. The gastronomic experiences that travellers have in a destination is a key element in the determination of their level of satisfaction when they travel. As food and tourism are, and have always been, closely integrated, the experiential potential that food entails should stimulated a growing interest among local producers of tourism services and local destination management organisations. **The question is: Is the tourist experience single-dimensional or multi-dimensional? Tourists are increasingly demanding a higher standard in quality services, particularly for quality food and hospitality, and such "secondary", "derisive" and "supporting" experiences should catch the full attention in the tourism industry.**

The level of satisfaction referred to hotel and accommodation is 5.5, a value which is probably determined by the shortage of hotels, residences and accommodation facilities in Predappio area. The local offer is very limited, and probably more visitor accommodation is the highest priority infrastructure needed to support the future growth of Predappio's tourism industry. At peak times, as July and August, there is little commercial accommodation and those rooms that are available are located out of town and in beautiful, but remote areas. As the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the supply of accommodation have a direct influence on the overall success and development of tourist destinations, it is logical that the development of the accommodation sector should be a fundamental element of the overall destination planning.

Figure 24 Predappio - perception of accommodations, natural environment, cultural heritage and entertainment



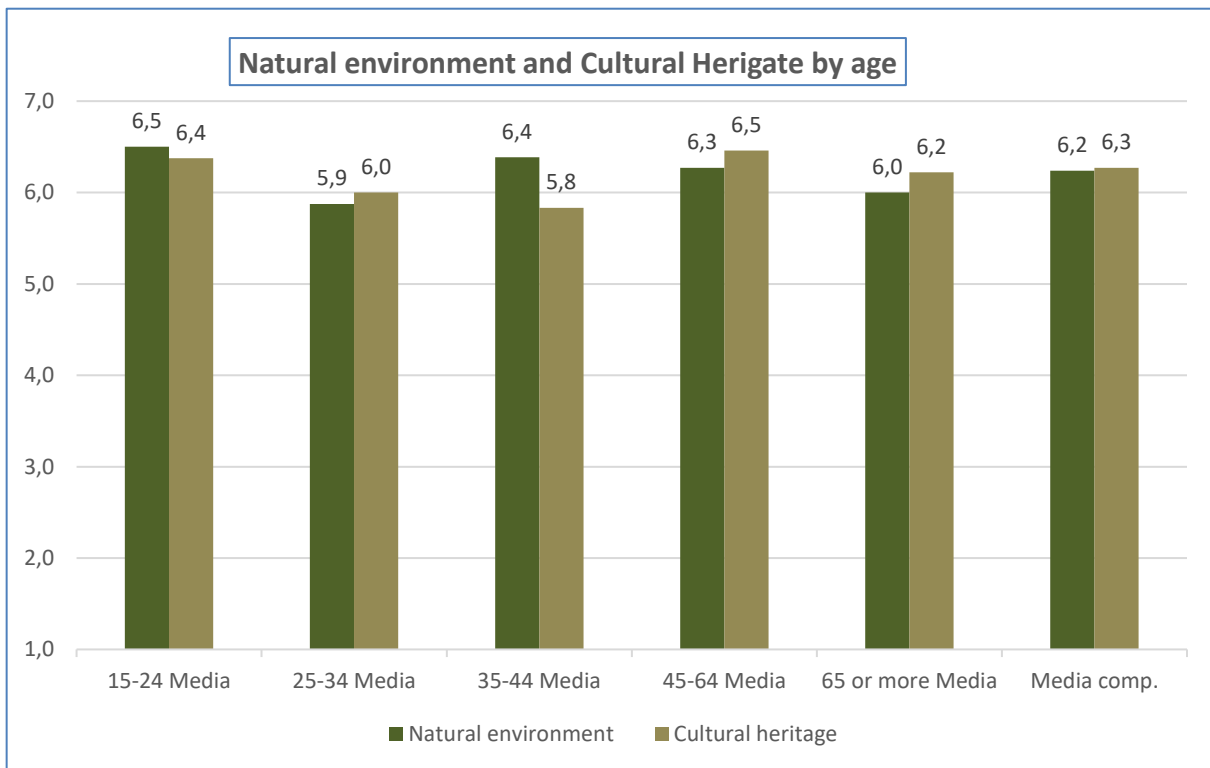
With reference to perception of Nature and Cultural heritage, the following graphs in fig. 26 report the differences of perception based on age, employment and region of provenance.

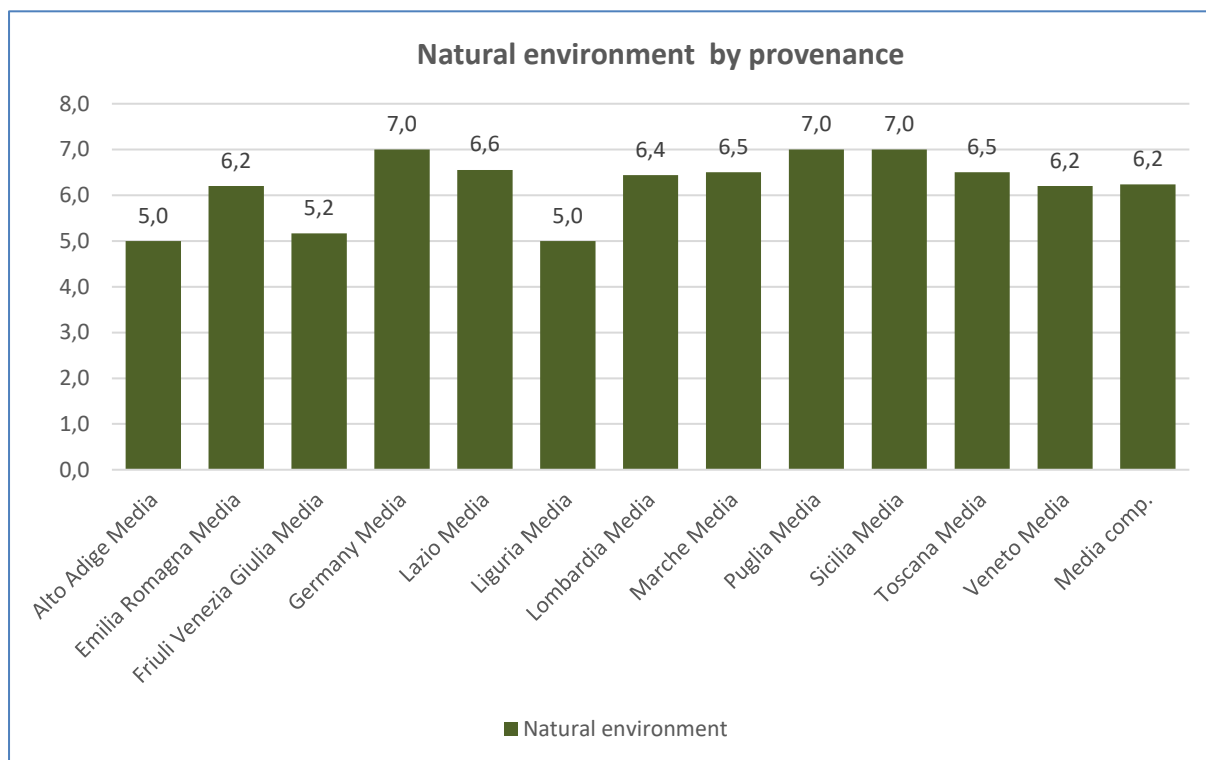
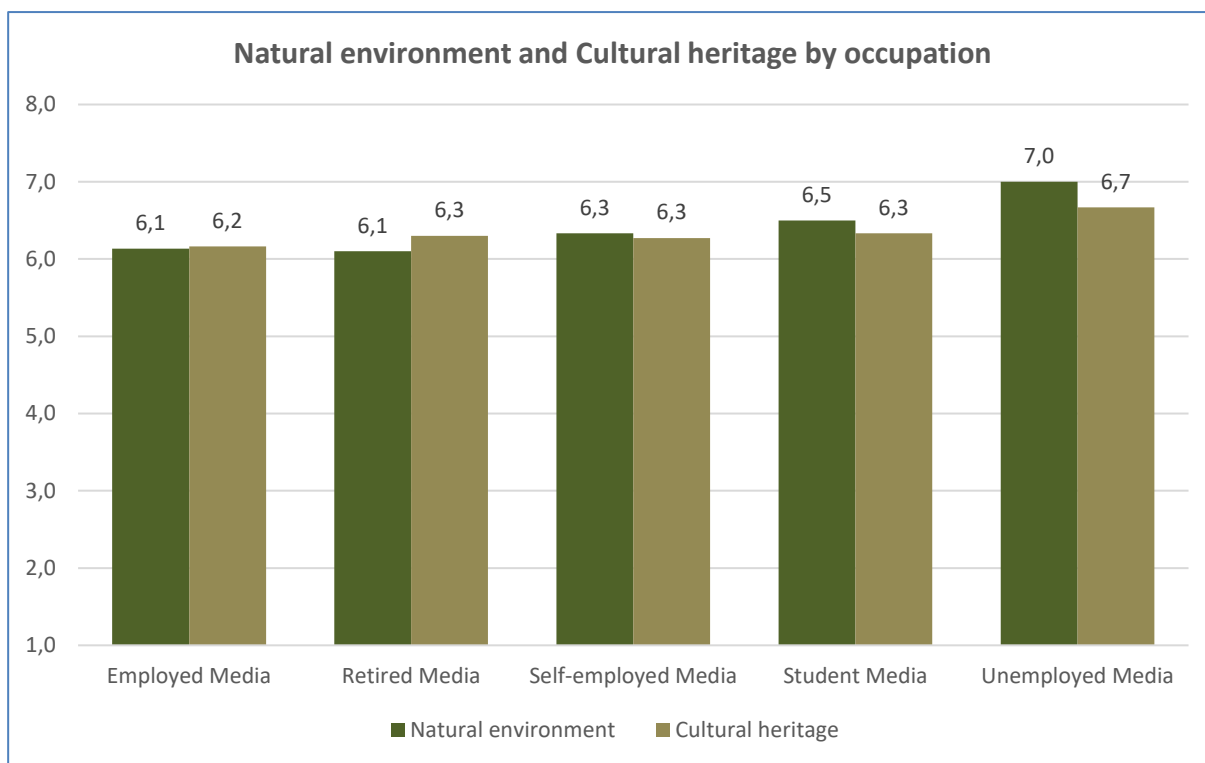
Natural environment is mostly appreciated by young people 15-24 and students, while cultural heritage is praised by adults in age range 45-64.

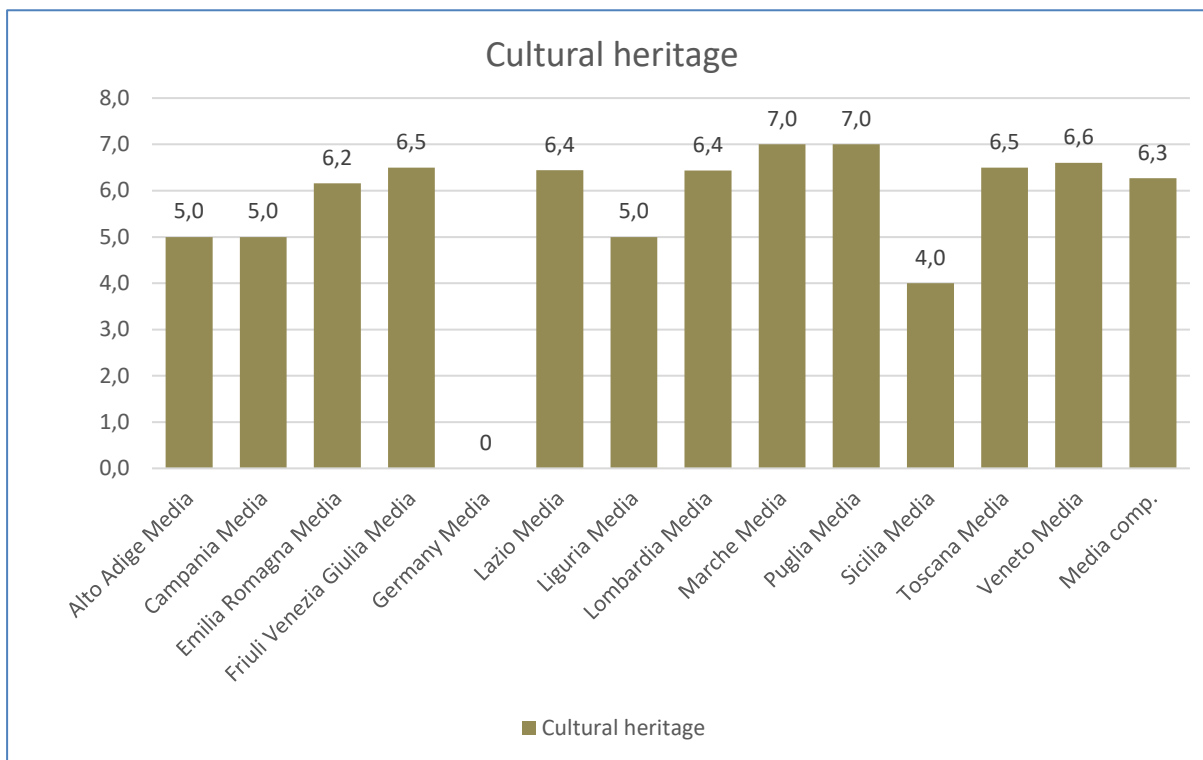
The positive evaluation given by young people and students is very interesting and should be further analyzed in order to examine in depth profiles, attitudes, and implications for destination strategies. In recent years, the scientific community has increasingly turned its attention to an examination of one segment of tourist demand—the young. Youth are “the new visitors in the tourism market” and the importance of this market segment lies in the fact not only that it is becoming larger but also that it represents the market of the future. Different studies confirm that the important motivations in the choice of a destination are the discovery of new cultures, discovery of new landscapes, contemplation of natural and artistic heritage, contact with local community **and the contact with nature**. Any successful tourism industry player requires not only the ability to recognize change, but to also effectively respond to changes. Generational change is one such occurrence, offering both opportunities and challenges for tourism destinations Each new generation is confronted by unique contemporary circumstances providing avenues for delineated and context-based perspectives.

Generation Z comprises individuals born in the year 1995 and after, making the oldest members 24 years old; A hyper-connected generation, Gen Z grew up in an era of unprecedented awareness about human behaviour, personal health, technology and humankind’s impact on the environment. A research carried out among 700 respondents from each of the European Focus markets: France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy carried out between December 2019 and January 2020 shows that the contemporaries of Greta Thunberg have all identified climate change as arguably the most important topic for them, with more than 50% in each market identifying it as the issue with which they engage the most. It also demonstrates that protecting the environment is a core value.

Figure 25 Natural and cultural environment by age and occupation







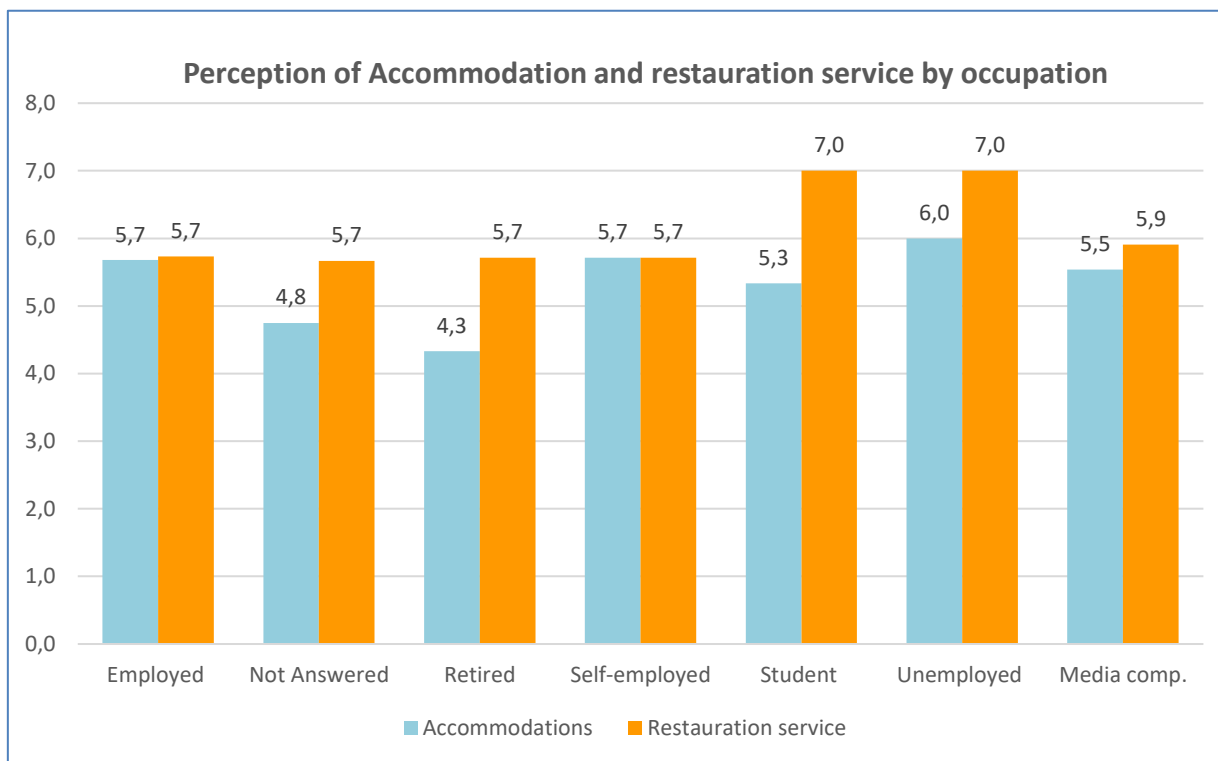
As far as accommodation and lodging, as shown in fig. 28, retired people show the lower preferences for this service, which is probably connected to the fact that older and retired people represent the segment which higher spending capacity and more available time to spend on vacation. On the contrary, Predappio and its territory does not offer a wide range of lodging facilities. Moreover, apart from Condè Wine Resorts, agritourism and bed and breakfast in Predappio provide a limited proposal of ancillaries services that may also include in-destination ancillaries such as sightseeing tours, car rental, transfers or event tickets, typically provided by third parties, that can represent a key factor for longer stay and contribute to increase the number of vacation days spent at their destination.

Length of stay is a variable of special interest for any tourist destination, given its positive relationship to tourism income; tourists who stay at their destination longer visit more attractions and generate more business for the destination than those who stay for a shorter time.

About restauration service it is possible to notice a positive perception by students and unemployed, while employees, self-employed and retired all have the same perception, with a value rate of 5.7.



Figure 26 Predappio – Accommodation and restauration by occupation



### 3.4 The tourism workers attitude in Predappio

The average perception of local workers’ professionalism and sense of hospitality felt by tourists and visitors is represented in fig. 29.

In general, respondents consider Predappio a place where they fell welcomed, with a rate of 6.13.

The data is explained by the fact that, first, Predappio is undoubtedly a warm and welcoming community. and secondly both residents and workers are used to engage with tourists, as Predappio has always been a popular and very frequented destination, especially when Mussolini’s crypt was open and could be visited. The welcoming behavior and attitude attitudes of residents toward tourism are crucial for its successful development and several studies provide exhaustive discussions on this topic. One of the most corroborated theories used in the tourism literature is the social exchange theory (SET), according to which individuals tend to support tourism development when the trade-off between costs and benefits is perceived as positive.

Moreover, the welcoming attitude of the local population may impact upon the way tourists perceive a destination and several studies and statistical analyses show that tourists lodging in municipalities where residents are more positive to tourism experience are more satisfied with the overall experience.

Community planners and destination management organizations need therefore to be concerned with all stakeholders in a destination, rather than only with the visitors. Involving local community in tourism initiatives

is acknowledged to be a milestone in tourism development and destination management bodies should try to accomplish stakeholder involvement. Professionalism shows a positive value rate, once again since Predappio is popular and very frequented destination.

Figure 27 Predappio - Perception of professionalism and hospitality



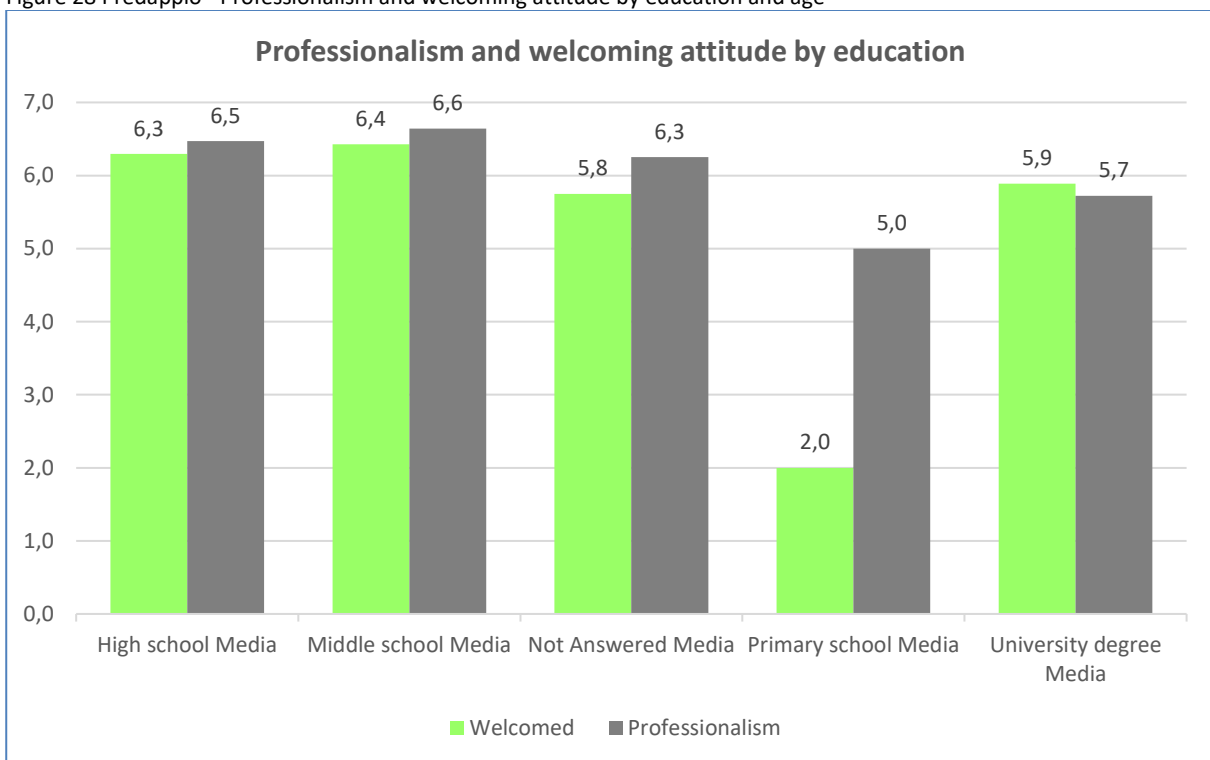
Tourists and visitors with primary school education don't feel a deep spirit of hospitality probably because, as the history of Predappio is strictly interconnected with their personal lives (if we assume that people with primary school education were born during WWI), they have a bias towards the residents who might represent the continuity of an ideology. They assign a low value also to professional skills of people working in tourism, as visitors with university degree. The professionalism low rate might be attributed to the actual lack of skills or to the dissatisfaction with the quality of the service that has been provided.

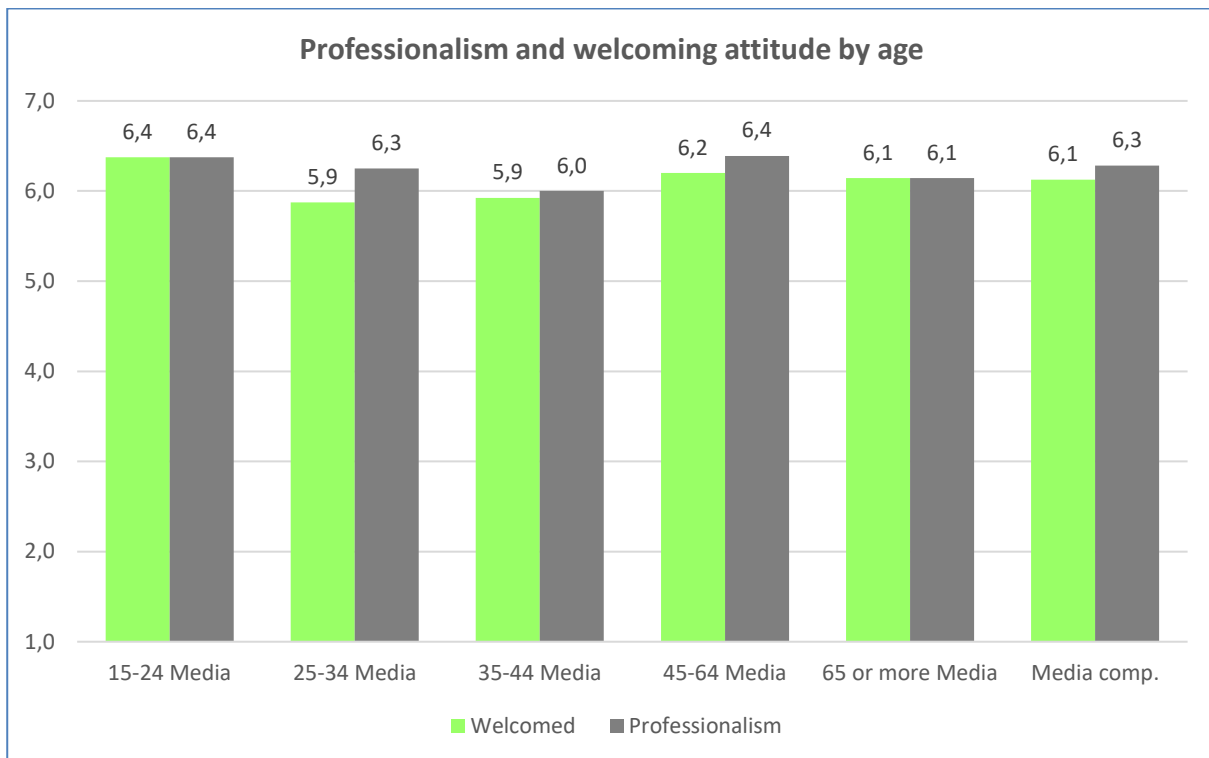
Destination competitiveness and tourism professionals' skills and competences are closely correlated, and a deeper research of this topic should be further investigated.

Young visitors represent the segment that appreciate more both the welcoming attitude and the professionalism of local citizen. Young people are probably less attentive to skills and competence and are more pleased about authenticity and interaction with local people and culture. A study published by the **European Travel Commission (ETC)** reveals that generation Z travellers believe that tourism benefits local

communities and are also aware of the personal benefits of travel, such as understanding other cultures and building life experiences and self-confidence; while budget-conscious, Gen Z will spend more for immersive, experiential travel that lets them experience life as a local, not a tourist, in Search Of Unique, Authentic Experiences. For members of Gen Z, travel is all about the experience, not just the destination. They want to go to a cooking class and learn to make the harvest, to explore the destination and its people thoroughly. People in Predappio are warm, welcoming and friendly and represent the perfect place to greet young people eager to live and experience the life of the locals.

Figure 28 Predappio - Professionalism and welcoming attitude by education and age



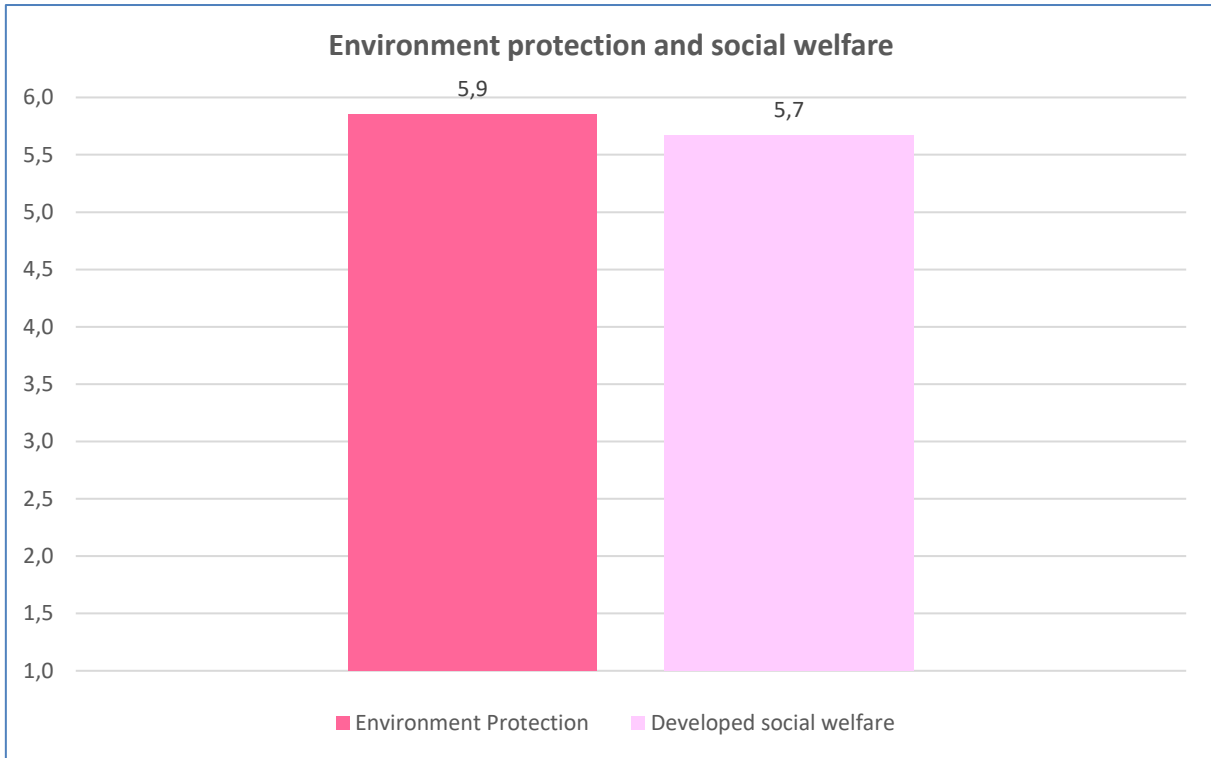


### 3.5 The perceived social responsibility and environment protection in Predappio

As far as local social welfare and environment protection, respondents value welfare 5.7 and environment protection 5.9, as reported in fig. 30. The perception, in general, is not negative when we consider that the maximum value is 7.00.

Local social welfare value could be attributed to different factors such as the presence of many abandoned and empty rural houses and buildings both in the countryside and in village center, the lack of services, facilities and local transports and rural depopulation.

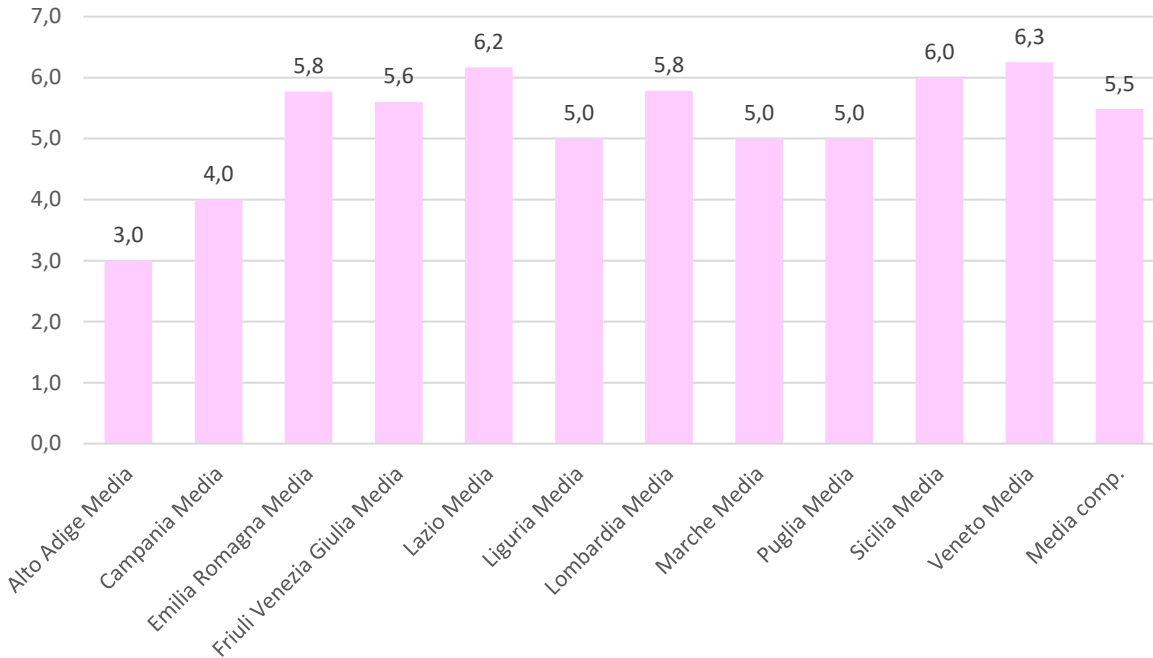
Figure 29 Predappio - Perception of social welfare and environment protection



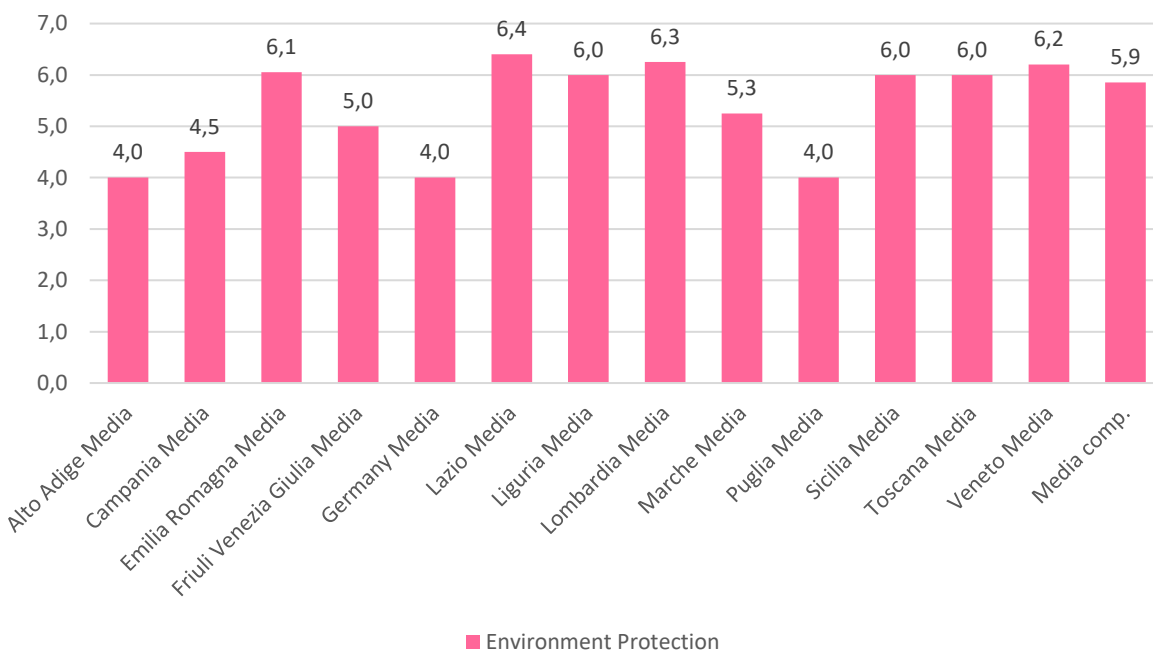
As far as provenance, the results are quite imbalanced, with more positive values from visitors from northern regions as Emilia Romagna, Veneto and Lombardia, while visitors from southern regions and north east regions are more critical., as shown in fig. 32.

The reason connected to lower rates might be related to the idea that touristic destinations should provide more richness to its inhabitants and the consequent flowering and development of commercial activities and services for tourists and residents. Predappio, on the contrary, do not offer a wide choice and variety of options and there is a shortage of arts and entertainment facilities, poor bus connections with cities, limited access to youth employment and low wages that encourage young people to leave the community.

### Developed social welfare by provenance



### Environment Protection by provenance



## 4. The overall reputation of Predappio

The reputation analysis of Predappio was conducted with Google Trend analysis and with interviews to 66 visitors and tourists.

In order to assess how much Predappio is actually (un)known at both the national and international level, what it is associated with in the view of the general public and how popular local attractions are, data from Google Trends were analyzed (period of the execution: 01 August 2020 – 01 October 2020).

**Many online researches** related to Predappio reflect a concentration of popularity for terms and keywords **connected with historical characters and facts, which led us to affirm that Predappio's reputation is strongly related to Mussolini, but also terms as Rocca delle Caminate and Borgo Condè Wine Resort return interesting data.**

Setting the filter category "Travels" and exploring the last 90 days (Jul-Sep), it is interesting to note that the term Predappio was **explored particularly on Fridays and Saturdays**, which suggests the intention of potential visitors to visit the place on weekends.

Unfortunately, **lodging facilities in Predappio and its surrounding are scarce**, and, at present, there are no hotels or accommodation in central Predappio. All lodging facilities, mainly agritourism or bed and breakfast, are in the countryside and provide few rooms.

While Google Trends provide information about the reputation of Predappio with the general public of internet users, only tourists can form a reputation based on the actual experience of the destination. Interviewing tourists in Predappio is also crucial to understand how the reputation of Predappio as tourism destination configures, which aspects of the local supply affect the overall reputation positively and which ones have a negative impact.

The structured survey questionnaires were submitted to 66 tourists visiting Predappio, through face-to-face interviews carried out from 09<sup>th</sup> of July to 8<sup>th</sup> of August.

All interviewed visitors **originate from Italy, except one tourist from Germany**. The low presence of foreign tourists is certainly due to Covid 19 emergency and restrictions, which has caused a huge diminishing of foreign presences in Italy during the summer. 33.33% of visitors (25 in number) come from Emilia Romagna, which suggests that, always due to Covid Emergency, **many people choose to visit close-to-home or proximity destinations as an alternative to classic vacations.**

**Culture is the main reason for visiting Predappio**, followed by visits to friends and relatives and day excursions from the beach. **All other assets, as nature, sports and food & wine show lower values and are not considered a primary motivation for visiting the territory.** This evidence provides implications for the diversification of primary tourism offering more diverse products, which potentially adds value by broadening the experiences of existing tourists at the destination or attracting different types of tourists who might not otherwise have visited Predappio.

Mean ratings related to **image and marketing activities are the lowest**, with image at 5.4, followed by marketing at 5.3.

Image of a destination is based on the perceptions of individuals about the destination, which determines their touristic behaviour and, consequently, their choice of destination; image is based on positive and/or negative associations which are key elements at the basis of an evaluation or a selection process that can provide the link between the motivations and choices of destinations. **In order to improve a negative image and/or to attract different clusters of visitors, Predappio could follow the theoretical constructs of image repair, image restoration and recovery marketing**, even if modifying or changing the consolidated image of a destination is very difficult. As a matter of fact, it can be affirmed that **Predappio is a dark tourism destination and a recent study by John Lennon affirms that the crypt and other attractions in Predappio that catalyse visitors, do not provide historical record or serve to educate individuals about the regime and its crimes. Rather they subvert historically reality and reinforce an inaccurate and dangerously misleading perspective on this dark period of Italian history.**

**Cultural heritage is the most praised element** with a very high rating (6.3), followed by natural heritage (6.2), restauration services (5.9) and accommodation and lodging (5.5).

Predappio is mostly appreciated for cultural heritage, which is naturally connected with the cultural and historical legacy of this destination. Besides the attractors related to Fascism, there are **many other elements of cultural and historical interest** as old Romanic churches (Sant 'Agostino and San Cassiano), the old and unfortunately in ruins Rocca d'Elmici, the precious Rocca and the small Borgo of Predappio Alta, the presence of paintings and ceramics of Mastrolupo, scattered around town, just to mention a few. **The long list of potential and interesting attractors related to cultural heritage, as mentioned above, demonstrates that Predappio has the characteristic to retain visitors for more than one day**, in order to visit all the interesting sites offered by the territory and should therefore also broadening its offer by developing new products for tourists and promoting both the primary elements of destination appeal and the secondary elements which might be attractive and will allow visitors to stay longer.

**Restaurants and lodging and accommodation show a lower level of satisfaction.**

The level of satisfaction referred to lodging and accommodation is 5.5, a value which is probably determined by the **shortage of hotels, residences and accommodation facilities in Predappio area**. The local offer is very limited, and probably more visitor accommodation is the highest priority infrastructure needed to support the future growth of Predappio's tourism industry. **Natural environment is mostly appreciated by young people 15-24 and students**, while cultural heritage is praised by adults in age range 45-64.

The positive evaluation given by young people and students is very interesting and should be further analyzed in order to examine in depth profiles, attitudes, and implications for destination strategies. In recent years, the scientific community has increasingly turned its attention to an examination of one segment of tourist demand—the young. **Youth are “the new visitors in the tourism market” and the importance of this market segment lies in the fact not only that it is becoming larger but also that it represents the market of the future.** In general, respondents consider **Predappio a place where they felt welcomed**, with a rate of 6.13.

The data is explained by the fact that, first of all, Predappio is undoubtedly a warm and welcoming community, and secondly both residents and workers are used to engage with tourists, as Predappio has



always been a popular and very frequented destination, especially when Mussolini’s crypt was open and could be visited.

