



**Mapping and Performance Check of the Supply of  
Accessible Tourism Services  
(220/PP/ENT/PPA/12/6491)**

*Case Study 11*

**Trentino, Italy**

*"This document has been prepared for the European Commission; however it reflects the views only of its authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein."*

**European Commission  
Enterprise and Industry Directorate General (DG  
ENTR)**

“Mapping and Performance Check of the Supply of Accessible Tourism Services” (220/PP/ENT/PPA/12/6491)

**Case Study: Trentino, Italy**

## Contents

Executive Summary .....	4
1.0 Introduction .....	6
2.0 Overview and background information.....	7
3.0 The integration of the supply chain .....	9
4.0 Provisions for cross-impairments .....	23
5.0 Business approach – building a business case for accessibility .....	24
6.0 Evidence of impact.....	26
7.0 Conclusions.....	27
8.0 Recommendations .....	28
Annex I: Criteria and justification for best practices .....	29

## Executive Summary

This case study examines the destination of Trentino, located in the Italian Dolomites. The Province acts as host to millions of visitors, both in winter and summer, for outdoor sports and recreation.

In recent years significant efforts have been made to provide an accessible environment and services for visitors with disabilities, creating inclusive tourism offers and support services through the actions of local municipalities, the private sector and NGOs working in cooperation.

Trentino prepared and successfully held the Nordic World Ski Championships from February 20 to March 3, 2013. This major event was hailed as the first international skiing event to be certified for the accessibility of the sites and services.

When planning for the accessibility certification, the project team led by Accademia della Montagna<sup>1</sup> found that the European Union does not have a suitable certification system for disabled access to skiing events or other sports events. Therefore, the Academy, in cooperation with local authorities and associations, prepared a certification programme to document and validate the quality of provisions at the event with respect to their accessibility. Over 1200 facilities have been assessed according to accessibility standards.

-

As a result of this effort, for the first time, the Nordic World Ski Championships were completely free from any architectural barriers. Stadiums in Lago di Tesero and Predazzo were awarded the **Certificate of Accessible Fiemme – OPEN EVENT**, in order to guarantee access to everybody to all the competitions and events. These measures were part of a major programme of accessibility that involved the entire valley and aimed to open the world event and Val di Fiemme to everybody, disabled persons but also elderly people and people with food allergies and intolerances, for whom restaurants and hotels prepare specific menus. During the event, over 400 people with disabilities and carers attended, demonstrating the success of the initiative.

The Accessible Fiemme initiative builds partly on the work of the voluntary sector, with the association SportABILI providing strong leadership and support for hotels and leisure providers in the area. The NGO provides staff, volunteers and technical support both summer and winter to ensure that all guests can enjoy outdoor leisure and sports in safe and well structured activities.

*Accessible Trentino* remains an ongoing project, involving the Accademia della Montagna del Trentino, the municipal authorities and their services, local

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://accademiamontagna.tn.it/la-montagna-accessibile>

associations, hotels and restaurants and other private enterprises, combining their efforts to enhance the accessibility of tourism offers in the province and to market Trentino to the world as an *Accessible Destination*.

With the continuing support of the provincial authorities, accessibility has become firmly embedded in the tourist offers of Trentino and it enjoys a reputation for inclusive tourism for visitors of all ages and abilities.

## 1.0 Introduction

Trentino is an autonomous province located in Northern Italy and has a resident population of approximately 524,000 inhabitants.

In the economic system, tourism is a major source of income and shows progressive growth, both in summer and in winter, thanks to a steady increase in both the quality of the offers of holiday accommodation and a diverse range of activities.

Within the territory there are 1,500 hotel facilities with a total of 94,000 beds, as well as more than double this number of beds in complementary businesses such as private apartments and second homes.

The natural beauty of Lake Garda, the Dolomites and the valleys bring millions of tourists to spend their holidays in Trentino which has established itself as a destination of excellence at national and international level.

Considering only the hotels and related businesses, there were about 3.5 million arrivals (in 2012) and 15.5 million bookings (2012), with the major growth trend being in foreign arrivals.

Trentino offers over 500 km of slopes for alpine skiing linked by 236 lifts and a further 500 km of cross country ski trails and 500 km of bike paths constructed for family cycling, with as many trails for mountain biking.

It is therefore a target of a well established and appreciated : environmental characteristics and a prolonged and careful work of the operators has enabled us to win new customer targets and strengthen its presence in the domestic and international market . The image of the Valley of Fiemme is also strongly linked to sporting events (Marcialonga, Nordic World Ski Championships , World Cup races , etc. that have helped to strengthen further the image of an area with a strong " sporty " reputation. The sport is in the DNA of this territory. This is also evidenced by the strong presence of sports associations and "organizing committees" that operate with passion and energy for the production of events of great importance, strong media coverage and high socio-cultural value.

The area has widespread volunteer resources that can be mobilized, representing an element of extraordinary value. The tourist and sport facilities have enjoyed gradual improvement, being organized and structured to meet the diverse needs of target customers. Trentino is firmly committed to improving the quality of tourism offers, while maintaining its territorial identity, so that the gradual process of sustainable growth can be guaranteed.

## 2.0 Overview and background information

### Trentino and Accessible Tourism

Taking advantage of its rich network of business associations, the Autonomous Province of Trento, has included guidelines for a number of years for the provincial tourism policy relating specifically to **accessible tourism** as an area of development and quality in the definition of hospitality for all. Trento has aimed at increasing its competitiveness by putting the region “on the map” of international accessible tourist destinations.

Over several years the Mountain Academy has proposed and implemented projects for territorial development and training aimed at the dissemination of culture, also taking into account the access needs of disabled visitors and citizens. The Mountain Academy was therefore chosen as the body appointed by the Autonomous Province of Trento to carry out projects and disseminate the results of actions in the sphere of Accessible Tourism.



The **Accademia della Montagna** (Mountain Academy) of Trentino, a Foundation of the Autonomous Province of Trento, initiated a project in 2010 - 2013 called "Mountain Access" that led to the creation of the **Open** trademark (quality brand in the field of accessible tourism) and *Help Lines* service.

It is instructive to note the range and number of the Board of Directors of the Mountain Academy:

- Autonomous Province of Trento
- Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Handicraft and Agriculture
- University of Trento
- Provincial College of mountain guides
- Association leaders of the territory of Trentino
- Provincial College of Professional Ski Instructors of Trentino
- Association of Trentino ski instructors
- Shelters Managers Association of Trentino

Other Associate Members include:

- The Provincial Federation of Livestock Breeders
- The National Body of Mountain Rescue and Caving Service, Province of Trentino

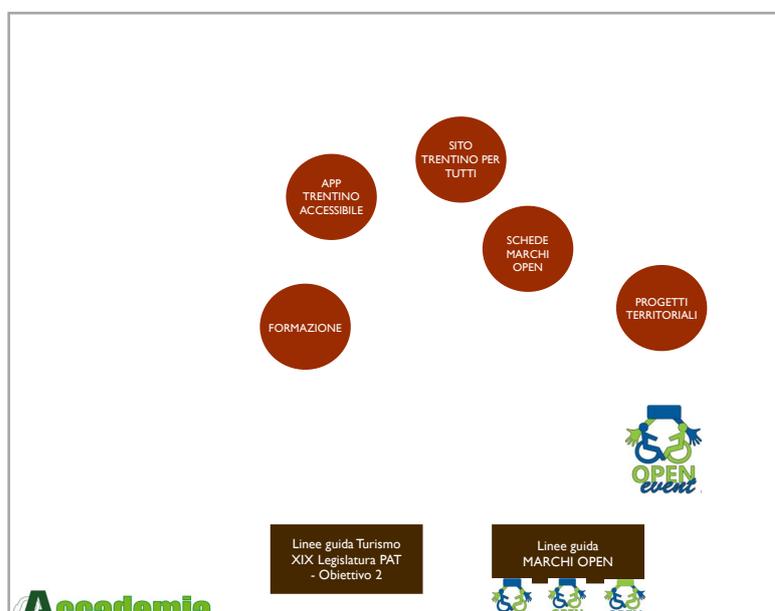
In the early stages of the project a small visitor survey (200 respondents) was conducted with the members of the local SportABILI association which provides year-round accessible leisure and sport opportunities to people with disabilities in the area. This showed a slight majority in favour of winter

activities (54%), with skiing being preferred by 98% of the sample. Regarding the summer season approximately 80% of the sample is usually hiking, 8% take part in riding and 6% archery. The survey also showed that the association is able to engage people from different geographical areas, with almost 77% coming from outside the province. The respondents were evenly distributed between the different provinces of north-central Italy.

**The project "Accessible Fiemme"** set up the following objectives:

1. implementation and qualification of the system of accessible tourism in hotels and other businesses with the introduction of targeted services;
2. involvement , promotion and networking of local actors through the creation and strengthening of interactions and collaborations;
3. strengthening of initiatives and structures already present or under construction / adaptation;
4. integration of the project with other initiatives in the course of the work;
5. creating value added, with a distinctive tourism product to be positioned in a diverse and interesting market;
6. creating and obtaining innovative certifications to enhance Trentino Tourism and to be used both in promotional and marketing activities and for submitting any further nominations for events of national and international caliber;
7. inform and raise awareness on the issue of different skills;
8. have a pilot project that could be extended to other areas of province;
9. generate economic activity for the entire territory.

The following diagram shows the initiatives promoted by the Mountain Academy of Trentino in agreement with the Council of the Open brands.



The initiatives are:

- Education,
- APP ACCESS Trentino

- Trentino Per Tutti website
- Open Brand trademark
- OPEN Event
- Territorial Project.

For the management of **Open Brands** the Mountain Academy has created a Scientific Committee called the *Open Council* which includes:

- Department of Labour and Welfare of the Autonomous Province of Trento
- Welfare Services Department of the Autonomous Province of Trento
- Sports Office of the Autonomous Province of Trento
- Education Service of the Autonomous Province of Trento
- Hotel Association of Trentino
- Confcommercio Trentino – Union
- University of Trento
- Trentino Federation of Cooperatives
- Confesercenti of Trentino
- Cooperative HandiCREA
- Cooperative Without Barriers
- Association SportAbili

### 3.0 The integration of the supply chain

Through the mechanism of the Accessible Trentino project, led by the Mountain Academy, the whole tourism value chain in Trentino was engaged in the development and implementation of the various sub-tasks to create and brand Trentino as an “Accessible Destination”. The activities included:

- *Development of Guidelines for the OPEN brands*
- *Mapping and registration of accessible paths*
- *Training*
- *Review of Funding criteria*
- *APP ACCESS Trentino*
- *Website Trentino for All – Trentino Per Tutti*
- *Ski World Cup*

- *New projects*

These are each described, below.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE “OPEN” BRANDS

After a major consultation with various stakeholders, three quality brands were defined in the field of accessibility.

- **Open:** refers to public and private structures, facilities, accommodation and commercial facilities, etc.
- **Open Event:** refers to events large and small, sporting and cultural activities.
- **Open Area:** refers to the territories and tourist destinations



The brands provide a clear and well defined path to become certified, and this was approved by the Provincial Government through the resolution to approve the *Guideline no. 1953 of 14 September 2012* which simultaneously entrusted to the Mountain Academy the operational management of the same.

The particularly innovative aspect is that these brands are not designed, promoted and recognized by a private entity, but by a non-partisan public body.

In addition, the governing boards of mapping and certification of facilities to the Open trademark have been prepared by the collaboration of many interests: hoteliers' association, associations for the promotion of disability, commercial enterprises, public enterprises, etc.

The certificates were then approved by the Board of the Open, the supervisory body and coordination committee of the Open trademarks, in

which sit the most important local stakeholders (universities, public authorities, economic operators, etc.).

**The Trentino Accessible Destination Certification System** is described in a 45 page document: *LINEE GUIDA PROTOCOLLO DI ACCESSIBILITA'* – cataloguing the steps to be taken in certification, roles and responsibilities, areas of application, required documentation, training, as well as the use and management of the Protocol.

## ACCESSIBLE PATHS

The Mountain Academy, in collaboration with the Association of SportAbili Predazzo, which accompanies and supports people with disabilities to acquire a sports physical ability, promoted the mapping of paths and trails at altitude that can be followed by person using wheelchairs, preparing maps that can be downloaded from the website, showing the characteristics of the path. He process involved user-testing of trails by disabled people.

A handbook "*Criteria for accessible trails*" has been produced that will allow a gradual mapping of the province.

Currently 14 routes have already been mapped and rapid deployment is expected in the coming months.



The guest has the possibility to download the GPS tracks and display the map directly on their mobile application (see Mobile APP Access Trentino, below).

## **TRAINING**

The Mountain Academy of Trentino has promoted training and awareness-raising on the issue of accessible tourism in several schools and educational situations:

CFP Enaip School of Hotel Tesero:

- realization of a course of 16 hours in the three years
- development of a 16 hour course in the 4th year of the hospitality industry
- coordination of laboratory activities ( video and audio )

The White Rose Institute of Cavalese:

- for the realization of a course of 16 hours to girls of a class V ^ sector Social  
identification of volunteers to be included in the staff of the World Special Assistance

Institute of Mezzolombardo secondary Martini:

- About 6 hours on the subject of the tourism product , where was placed the example of the World di Fiemme 2013

Higher Education course for Senior Technician Tourism and Hospitality Management Rovereto :

- 12 hours of lectures were carried out at the institute, addressing the issue of accessibility and best practices adopted during the World Cup ski competition 2013.

Course for unemployed - Zetaform srl:

- For a total of about 36 hours addressing the issue of accessibility, trademarks Open and certifying boards.

Designing Learning activities for OPEN brand: has created a path to turn to consultants, experts and evaluators of Open Brands . The project was presented and approved by the Board of the Open.

- A training project for the Artisans Association of Trentino has been undertaken in collaboration with Dr. Armeniani Association, with a training project to address businesses and craftsmen in Trentino.

**REVIEW                      CRITERIA                      FOR                      FUNDING**  
The Mountain Academy initiated an application with the provincial offices to

obtain the implementation of the funding criteria of the law n . 6 of the Autonomous Province of Trento with a specific contribution to tourism enterprises to implement the Open trademarks.

## **APP ACCESS Trentino**

The activities carried out by the Mountain Academy of Trentino, through collaboration with the cooperative *Handicrea* and *Informatica Trentino*, has led to the development of a mobile application that enables people with disabilities and reduced mobility to move around within the territory with greater peace of mind, being aware of the access barriers and where to find accessible services.

The app now contains about 1,200 facilities, all of which have been carefully surveyed:

- 800 structures in Trento
- 200 structures in Rovereto
- About 70 structures in Val di Fiemme
- 150 structures used during the Universiade

The disabled person has the possibility to create their own personal profile, specifying their own characteristics, and decide on the type of services which they want to access (restaurant, bar, hotel, etc..).

The software indicates the level of accessibility and provides detailed information of the paths the result of a mapping carried out by the cooperative *Handicrea*. Indicates if a place is available and the best way to reach it.

This application will be further developed and the software infrastructure will allow it to be used to map other facilities and territories.

### **Figure 1. Views of the mobile app - ACCESS Trentino**



Similarly, the same can be combined with other mobility services now being tested (for example, the mapping of public transport services) .

In light of these developments a rapid implementation is expected, setting up similar projects in different territories of the region.

### Trentino WEB SITE FOR ALL

The Academy has formed a working group with the participation of all the associations that deal with disability services aimed at the revision and implementation of the web portal [www.trentinopertutti.it](http://www.trentinopertutti.it) . The objective is to create a site that will become the reference point for all those who want a holiday in Trentino and require special services.

The current website is very basic and will be developed, presenting a comprehensive guide to accessibility of the different areas and facilities within the entire the region.

Figure 2. Website of Trentino Per Tutti (under development)



## SPREADING NEW PROJECTS

The Mountain Academy is committed to the dissemination and implementation of new local projects . Currently in 2014, new projects under discussion include:

- Protocol accessibility of the Highlands Cimbri
- Val di Non
- Garda Lake
- Belluno - Dolomites

### 3.1 Accessible event: Nordic Ski World Cup, Val di Fiemme, 2013

During February and March 2013, Val di Fiemme hosted the FIS Nordic World Ski Championships. From 20th February until 3rd March, the world's best cross country skiers and ski jumpers competed again on the Italian snow. This was a major effort for all partners in the Trentino access /OPEN Brands project and first test of the accessibility strategy and actions that were put in place.

A review of the main aspects of the World Cup as regards accessibility is presented below:

## SKI WORLD CUP - Trentino Fiemme 2013



Val di Fiemme has organized more than 100 **World Cup** races over the past 20 years and *Tour de Ski* with its two final stages is the event with the largest television share in the winter season.

The Organising Committee and Academy of Mountain Trentino took the opportunity of this great event to raise awareness on the topic of accessible tourism, deciding to make the event fully accessible through the brand *Open Event*. Trentino made the pledge to ensure that the Ski World Cup would be certified as an Accessible Event – the first such Ski World Cup in history.

## MEASURES UNDERTAKEN

Certification of Accessibility of Nordic World Ski Championships 2013 in Val di Fiemme involved the entire territory in the following specific actions:

- Involvement of all local stakeholders (community of Valle, municipalities, associations, training institutes, etc. .) through holding numerous meetings in the area aimed at achieving the objectives;
- Infrastructure works for the accessibility of facilities in the World Championship venue (grandstands, parking, transportation, trails, restaurants, bars, tickets office): all functional areas of the event were made accessible.
- Training to volunteers: training activities were carried out with about 200 volunteers training in schools. They have been made aware of the needs of disabled visitors and how to cater for them.
- Special assistance: Special service teams were operating throughout the event.
- Accessible information: an accessible section of the portal of the event was created and information was also provided in alternative formats and via specific information tools. The info point for the event was made, conforming to accessibility standards.

- A Mobile App " Accessible Trentino" was created for the World Cup, aimed at people with disabilities.

Ten years after the successful 2003 World Championships in Val di Fiemme, the revamped XC Stadium in Lago di Tesero and the Ski Jumping Arena in Predazzo, staged 12 days of spectacular sport events. The World Ski Championships were prepared and managed by the local Organising Committee (OC) and many volunteers.

New generation and low carbon emission facilities, multi-purpose structures and a deep sense of hospitality were particular aspects of Val di Fiemme, in 2013, confirming the Trentino area and the entire country among world's best locations for Nordic sports.

In 2003 Val di Fiemme received the UNI EN ISO 14001 certification, and all the future events will be environmentally friendly events. Furthermore, the alpine valley has been catering for disabled visitors for many years and for this reason the Nordic Ski Fiemme OC worked hard to set up an Access Certification scheme to make the 2013 Nordic World Ski Championships in Val di Fiemme the first Nordic world event without any barriers.

When planning for the accessibility certification, the Accademia della Montagna found that the European Union does not have a suitable certification system for disabled access to skiing events or other sports venues or events. Therefore, the Accademia della Montagna in cooperation with local authorities and associations, prepared a certification programme to document and validate the quality of accessibility at the event.

As a result of this effort, for the first time, the Nordic World Ski Championships were completely free from any architectural barriers. Both the stadiums in Lago di Tesero and Predazzo were awarded the **Certificate of Accessible Fiemme**, in order to guarantee access to everybody to all the competitions and events. These measures are part of a major programme of accessibility that involves the entire valley and aims to open the world event and Val di Fiemme to everybody, disabled persons but also elderly people and people with food allergies and intolerances, for whom restaurants and hotels prepare specific menus.

The project was developed by **Accademia della Montagna's** Director *Iva Berasi* and Project Manager *Matteo Bonazza*, who provided answers to the following questions, put by Newspaper Press Office's Mario Facchini in 2013:<sup>2</sup>

**What is the relationship between sports and disability in Val di Fiemme and what does the 2013 Worlds represent for disabled persons?**

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.newspower.it/comunicati/Fiemme/CS/CartellaStampa\\_TourdeSki2012/eng/accessibility.doc](http://www.newspower.it/comunicati/Fiemme/CS/CartellaStampa_TourdeSki2012/eng/accessibility.doc)

*The SportAbili Association has been operating in Val di Fiemme for 12 years, making sport activities, winter sport in particular, possible for people with physical, sensory, or mental disabilities. We are closely linked to the Guardia di Finanza Alpine School that provides us qualified trainers and we aim to present ourselves as a bridge between the disabled and the 'able' universes, bringing the two worlds together precisely where the gap seems widest, namely in the areas of sport and tourism.*

**What was the impact from the World Cup event that aimed to be without any barriers?**

*(Iva Berasi). I see the Worlds in 2013 as a fundamental step from a social point of view first of all. We made holidays and sport events accessible for all, because everyone has the right to be part of these so-called normal activities and things, that for some people are the hardest on earth. We were able to launch a message to the entire world, thanks to the media that showed what Trentino and Val di Fiemme were capable of doing.*

**What's next, after the 2013 World Cup?**

*We plan to make the entire valley accessible in the deep hope to see the 2015 World Championships take place here. To this purpose, there is a new project named 'Montagna Accessibile' ('Accessible Mountain'), that aims to test every structure on our territory in collaboration with the Accademia della Montagna del Trentino (Trentino Mountain Academy), Handicrea and Senza Barriere associations.*

**How long does it take to get the certification?**

*(Matteo Bonazza). We firstly had to create some sort of a rule concerning this certificate, because there are no written rules on a national basis. We took an international model in order to define all the criteria to follow. In the course of one year we got the certificate approved, so we could then carry on 'certificating' the valley.*

**What's the link between this project and tourism?**

*The project is mainly addressed to the tourism sector. 120 million disabled people in Europe go on holidays every year and spend around 68 billion Euro. This is definitely not a little group, and tourism enterprises are surely interested in this gigantic group. Val di Fiemme could walk hand in hand with our project and become a perfect destination for disabled persons.*

## Who supports the entire project, besides yourself?

*The Accademia della Montagna del Trentino (Trentino Mountain Academy) and its director Iva Berasi conceived the entire project and the Nordic Ski Fiemme OC immediately decided to be part of it, along with the Val di Fiemme Tourism Board, and the local municipalities that financially support us. The proposed activities have allowed us to make the event accessible and to facilitate a seamless integration.*

*The people involved were happy to cooperate in the realization of this important opportunity.*



The media have praised the choice of the Committee and the World Academy of the Mountains of Trentino and many newspapers have pointed out that it was the **FIRST EDITION OF FULLY ACCESSIBLE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**, the first to be certified as such.

### 3.2 The contribution of volunteers

A notable feature of the accessible offers in Trentino – and the whole project – has been the contribution of the voluntary sector, both to visitors' enjoyment of sports and leisure activities and to the overall quality of the facilities and services offered, through their support to the access auditing and validation process.

**Figure 3. The 5 Golden Rules of the Volunteer** (from World Cup website)



1. Smile: it's cheap and worth it!
2. Never answer "I don't know": use "I'll go and check", it's better.
3. If you can help, do it, also if it is not one of your tasks. Wonder about it later.
4. Be in time, respect anyone's job, speak properly and have common sense: these are the indispensable values for a winning team.
5. Be proud of your valley and the valley will be proud of you!

The following information about volunteering activities in Trentino has been provided by SportABILI.

Figure 4 Website of Val di Fiemme Accessible Holiday services (SportABILI Onlus)

<http://predazzo.sportabili.org/>



## Accessible holidays in Val di Fiemme

Sports activities with assistance for the disabled, accessible hotels and lots of excitement for everyone! In Val di Fiemme, thanks to the efforts of non-profit organizations, architectural barriers have been removed, also on the ski slopes! **L 'Association SportAbili** makes it possible to Val di Fiemme sports activities for people with disabilities, physical, sensory or intellectual.

*If I can do this, I can do it all!*

This is the philosophy of a non-profit organization with the purpose of social utility (NPO) founded in the belief that the person with a disability is a resource on which the community must invest, for a full recovery both in terms of labour, of intellectual production, both leisure and, therefore, relationships and interpersonal relationships.

**SportABILI is proposed as a bridge to unite the world of people with disabilities with that of the people "disabled", bringing these two groups in contact with each other right where the gap is greater: in the world of sport and tourism.**

The organization offers **ski lessons** for people with disabilities throughout the winter season, from December to late March. The lessons are organized on

the basis of the individual needs of students. The courses include downhill skiing on the slopes of *BELLAMONTE-LUSIA*, the winter home of SportAbili, just at the start of the lifts. The courses for Nordic Ski are held at *BOTTOM CENTER* of Lake Tesero and are taught by ski instructors specialize in teaching people with disabilities. The volunteers also well prepared and updated, alongside the instructors and teachers during the activities.

The association can provide aids for all types of disabilities: **mono** (also for children ten / twelve years and for extra large sizes), **Bisci** for adults and children, **dualski**, **stabilizers for the descent**, **sleds for the physically disabled** sitting. The lifts at Lusìa Bellamonte have measures, both at the gates of entry, the rotors, both on the platform of access to the system,



allowing you to take advantage of these facilities, with comfort and with greater ease. The shelters are equipped with wheelchairs to those who, during the day, want to rest in the warm, listen to some music, restore your spirit.

Accommodation is offered in 10 local hotels with a special “Convention” or price reduction negotiated by SportABILI.

### **Price Agreement “Convention”**

In the accommodation offered in the towns of Ziano di Fiemme Predazzo and location of Bellamonte, located 5 km above Predazzo on the SS50 state road that leads to Passo Rolle a number of price agreements have been made to encourage more custom from people with disabilities.

The so-called “Convention” provides that the Directors of the facility apply a discount of 10% to the disabled / member of the association and his or her family (or a companion in the case of groups). To take advantage of the discount the disabled person must present valid membership card SportABILI for the current year at the time of payment.

During the winter season of SportABILI sports activities take place mainly at the lifts in the resort of Lusìa Castelir (3 km after Bellamonte), while the hotels closest to the place of activity are those of Bellamonte.

During the summer, however, the organisational home of the association moves to Predazzo. The various activities that SportABILI offers in the months of July and August are held at different locations in the valley, so the hotels

used are the most suitable ones in the valley. Besides having the Convention discount, disabled visitors and their companions will find a warm and hospitable staff, in addition to the beautiful views of the mountains and accessible environments.



## Activities Programme

### *Winter program*

The principle activity during the winter is skiing. Skiing with SportABILI is possible thanks to the instructors at the Guardia di Finanza, the volunteers and the technical aids available to members, depending on the type of disability. Classes are held at the ski area Alpe di Lusia, Location Castellir, where members can arrive by car and make use of parking right next to the ski lifts and winter headquarters of the association. In the case of cross-country skiing, there is a centre at Lake Tesero, which is also easily accessible from the valley road and with ample parking available.

In addition to the fascinating descents, visitors can feel the same emotions of ski champions participating in the *CHALLENGE*, ski race, which is held every year, now in its ninth edition. Disabled skiers can join in with a skilled skier, thus creating a couple that comes into play, going down in a giant slalom, combining their own schedule and trying to take home the top spot in the rankings. Many friendships are born among the children but also among adult participants, including athletes and instructors and volunteers, friendships that last a lifetime. Good times spent together bear witness to the popularity of the events that are reinforced each year with the participation in this partner race.

## 4.0 Provisions for cross-impairments

The buildings and facilities that have received Accessible Fiemme Certification are suitable for guests with motor impairments, including wheelchair users, people who may use prostheses or mobility aids, as well as visually impaired and hearing impaired persons. Visitors with learning difficulties can also enjoy sports and recreation, winter and summer.

The SportABILI organisation provides the framework and the support staff and volunteers to enable people with a disability – or multiple disabilities – to enjoy active leisure experiences according to their individual requirements and abilities. As specialists in this field, SportABILI has a range of assistive equipment available for visitors, as described in the section above.

The OPEN brands and accessibility certification scheme address the requirements of people with physical disabilities, intellectual impairments, sensory disabilities, dietary needs, allergies and older age.

## 5.0 Business approach – building a business case for accessibility

Some indicative figures about the participation of disabled people in the World Cup:

During the event, over 400 people with disabilities and carers attended, demonstrating the success of the event.

This was a very important event in the international ski sports calendar which saw the creation of an important control room for its management and use of about 1,300 volunteers.

Some numbers from the event:

- 250,000 on-site spectators in the 12 days of competition;
- 600 million viewers around the world;
- 800 TV and radio operators accredited;
- 450 journalists;
- 150 photo journalists;
- 1,000 people VIP accreditations;
- 8,000 people in the VIP incentives programme;
- 21 medal events;
- 650 athletes;
- 62 participating nations ;
- 500 technicians ;
- 1,300 volunteers involved.

The incentive of capturing part of the World Cup market – and opportunities for continued success of the destination meant that local businesses were strongly involved in the accessibility work, making access and service.

For the realization of the World Cup Fiemme 2013, the Accessible Trentino project received money from the province. The province of Trentino received some state funds for the World Cup event.

The World Cup marked the start of the new era of accessible tourism offers in Trentino, as shown in the impact it has had on suppliers and visitors since that time.

## 6.0 Evidence of impact

### Overall business impacts in Trentino

Hotels and other Businesses in Trentino have changed their practices in line with making their facilities and services friendlier to disabled visitors. This has been a gradual change as there were disabled visitors to the area before the World Cup but the World Cup event undoubtedly served to focus attention on this target group and create new business opportunities.

Considering the promotion of accessible tourism in Trentino, there is still a gap in the mainstream marketing of the province. The official website Visit Trentino, at <http://www.visitrentino.it> does not have a dedicated section or link to guide disabled tourists to the information they may seek. The website does not include any links to SportABILI, nor does it feature, for example, a section with accessible hotels or accessible sports activities. Accessible accommodation for people with disabilities can be found on the Trentino website but these are not gathered in one place.

On the other hand, a search on Trip Advisor (on 3rd March 2014) for wheelchair accessible accommodation lists 618 hotels with wheelchair access and 39 wheelchair accessible rental accommodations in Trentino-Alto Adige region. (Trip advisor shows 21,708 hotels in Italy). Showing rather fewer numbers, [www.Hotels.com](http://www.Hotels.com) shows 95 hotels in Trento Province with an *accessible path of travel* and *accessible bathroom*. The difference in numbers reflects the different methods used by the two commercial online information and booking sites, rather than a discrepancy in actual numbers. Hotels.com measures specific accessible provisions whereas Trip Advisor uses a single criterion to define accessible hotels.

The Trentino per Tutti website (under construction) will give the definitive information about accessible accommodation in due course, showing that *local access auditing* plays an important role in assuring the reliability of access information that is displayed to customers via websites.

Currently a series of travel and culture guides for people with disabilities is available from the NGO Handicrea, <http://www.handicrea.it/> based in the city of Trento.

**Figure 5. Some information guides and services for persons with disabilities in the Province of Trento, (in Italian, edizione aggiornata 2013).**



		
 <p>le mappature dei percorsi</p>	 <p><a href="#">trekking urbano</a></p>	
 <p><a href="#">Nuove fermate a Trento</a></p>	 <p><a href="#">Accompagnamento Turisti Anziani e Disabili GSH - Cles</a></p>	 <p>Sportello "Muoversi"</p>

## 7.0 Conclusions

Trentino provides a practical example to other destinations that may be interested to develop a similar project to enhance their accessibility and gain the reputation of being an accessible destination.

The role of the Mountain Academy and its staff as project catalysor and centre of knowledge and expertise was crucial to the whole endeavour.

The opportunity of a major global sporting event to be hosted in the Val di Fiemme in 2013 provided the incentive and the resources necessary to make an extra effort in the field of accessibility, driven also by the social conscience of the Organising Committee.

It should be underlined that accessible Trentino – and the whole project – was realised in large part due to the actions of the voluntary sector. SportABILI, Handicrea and Senza Barriere provided know-how and practical support, based on years of experience in catering for and supporting visitors with disabilities.

Not only can many people enjoy sports and leisure activities in Trentino, it is also a significant part of the tourism business, with specially discounted accommodation and other arrangements negotiated and planned on behalf of visitors by the SportABILI association.

The achievement of a ground-breaking accessibility certification system based on international guidelines and standards and led by a Board of different local stakeholders has been shown to be capable of delivering results of a very high quality. As a result the destination has achieved its goal of being

recognised as accessible for the diverse range of visitors it attracts. A marketing strategy based on the brand value of *openness to all* has delivered on its intentions.

There are expectations for future initiatives which will reinforce the destination and extend the offers of accessible sport and leisure to other communities and areas within the Province.

## 8.0 Recommendations

Trentino has set its own agenda in terms of further development of the project as it seeks to maintain and improve the accessible tourism year-round destination, both in terms of activities offered, improved physical access, transportation and marketing its product.

It would be of great value to other European destinations (of many kinds and sizes) if Trentino / Mountain Academy could provide a written documentation of the process and outcomes of their work (in English and other languages), giving a more complete account than this Case Study can provide.

Trentino may also develop its ties with other destinations centred on excellence in mountain sports, so that other municipalities and regions in Italy and elsewhere may apply the accessibility certification system in their own destinations.

Added to this, the broader lessons that have been learnt in Trentino can undoubtedly be of value to those who seek to convince decision makers and business leaders about the value of promoting accessible tourism in their communities and regions – and showing how it can be done. The example of Trentino is not only a technical achievement in enabling access to sports and leisure but also an example of social cohesion in the mountain community and a successful integration of residents and visitors in shared activities.

With continued focus on the management of accessibility and participation of SMEs and NGOs, possibilities for local employment should flourish as year-round tourism brings more tourists and a better economy to the area. Plans to stage further sports events for disabled participants are in the pipeline, adding weight the reputation of Trentino for its development of tourism and leisure for all.

## Annex I: Criteria and justification for best practices

Table x: Criteria and justification for best practice

Criteria	Justification	On track/off track
<b>Relevance</b>	Addresses needs of different disabled groups, ages and abilities with focus on mountain sports and leisure. Destination level planning and organisation is matched by involvement of suppliers and NGO sector	
<b>Transferability</b>	An accessibility certification scheme was created and applied to a World Cup skiing event providing a possible model for other sports events.	
<b>Efficiency &amp; Effectiveness</b>	The efforts for 2013 World Cup paid off in terms of visitor numbers and reputation.	
<b>Sustainability</b>	Many tourists are repeat visitors.  New projects led by the Mountain Academy are planned and others are already under way. (New areas / regions, new Website and marketing push)	
<b>Innovation</b>	Trentino has built its tourism offer around the natural qualities of the region and used <i>accessibility</i> to leverage greater disability awareness, inclusive activities and higher quality of service for all visitors. It is in a continuing spiral of development but it requires constant attention and support from the political and technical sides if every business is to participate and succeed.	