



## **Mapping of Skills and Training Needs to Improve Accessibility in Tourism Services in Europe**

*Case Study 11. Consorzio Sociale COIN - Tandem, Italy*

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## Executive Summary

Being one of the most important tourist destinations in the world, Italy receives about 48 million foreign tourists yearly. The tourism industry is a significant part of the country's economy and employs around 2.6 million people, when direct, indirect and induced jobs are included. Accessible tourism started to take up an important place in the country's policies in the beginning of the 1990s. Throughout the decade, various initiatives increased the awareness and provided the public with information about a topic which hitherto had been almost unknown. Furthermore, initiatives at the European and international level contributed to several important projects which had an additional impact on the national context.

The non-profit organisation CO.IN was established in 1995 and obtained very soon an important role in the field of accessible tourism. This case study discusses the work carried out by CO.IN, and in particular, by one of its members: Tandem. The two of them have lead and participated in various projects in regards to people with disabilities and in the promotion of their rights. The initiatives that are related to accessible tourism are many and they have performed various training initiatives on different levels. For this case study we selected one training initiative to focus on, the EU.FOR.ME project and its "training for trainers".

This project had as its objectives to provide a training for future trainers and to, through this training, develop training material that could be used for this type of training when inserted in the educational programme of universities or schools offering tourism degrees. The motivation behind this project was the lack, throughout the European countries, of such a course content. 16 students participated in this course while the trainers involved professors and trainers in communication, IT and tourism. The final stage of the course consisted in practical work where the students were allocated different themes for which to develop course material that could be used as lectures. Throughout this stage, the students were tutored on a distance by the project partners in Spain, Germany, Luxembourg and Sweden.

The training course was carried out successfully and various impacts have been registered. Several of the participants still work with tourism related training, and some in the field of accessible tourism. The training material that was developed has been used in different contexts and is still available on the website of the project. An important result of the project was the 1 credit module which was inserted in the tourism degree course at the University of Perugia in Italy. However, it was suspended after a year due to lack of space in the educational programme.

It seems important to note that this project has had successful results and impact, however, there is still potential to exploit these results further. The training material, which is available in English, could be increasingly used, and adapted to different

contexts. The main piece of information resulting from the interviews performed for this case study is the fact that the tourism degree courses still do not include any training on accessible tourism. In this way, the main objective of the EU.FOR.ME project has not yet been reached. However, all the tools required have been developed by the project. This is highlighted in our recommendation section concluding this case study, where we present possible areas for the European Commission to intervene in order to support and promote accessible tourism and related training.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Italy is the number 5 tourist destination in the world. Out of the European countries, it is the country in Europe attracting the greatest number of tourists after France and Spain. In 2013, Italy received 47.7 million foreign tourists, which implies an increase of 0.5% compared to the previous year. The majority of tourists visit cities with historical and artistic interests, followed by beach resorts, lakes, and mountain resorts. Veneto is the most visited region, probably due to the location of Venice, followed by Latium, where Rome is located, Lombardy and Tuscany. Tourists come from all over the world but mostly from Europe (the top 3 consisting in Germany, France and the UK). However, the number two country of origin is the US. The tourism sector in Italy contributes to the GNP with 10.3% and employs about 2 681 000 people.<sup>1</sup>

The tourism sector is well developed in Italy, due to its economic importance and long history as a popular tourist destination. In regards to accessible tourism, Italy has made various efforts to render the country accessible for everyone, and as a consequence the country enjoys increased profits that the growing number of tourists imply. The Italian constitution from 1947 guarantees equal rights for all citizens in its article 3. In the years following the constitution, various associations were established with the aim of protecting the rights of people with disabilities. However, it is not until the end of the 1980s that the tourism sector starts to become more accessible.

In Italy, a new law was adopted in 1989 guaranteeing accessibility in different spaces, in particular public places. In the 1990s, thanks to increasing activity on European and international level, various initiatives in Italy evolved including associations such as CO.IN, as well as municipalities and regions. This increased activity resulted in the first national meetings and cooperation between Italian partners, and in 1997 a national Committee was established with the objectives of raising awareness among the public and tour operators, encouraging study and research, promoting training activity and of creating a network of information services in regards to accessible tourism. However, the committee did encounter major difficulties in involving the tour operators due to

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<sup>1</sup> Agenzia Nazionale del Turismo, <http://www.enit.it/en/studies-and-research.html> (accessed 21/10/2013)

their doubts about the economic possibilities and to the expected costs of adapting structures to the accessibility requirements.

Increased activity and projects on government level in 1997 brought together CO.IN, ENEA<sup>2</sup> and the Government's department for tourism with the aims of awareness raising, information and communication. In 1999, the project "Italy for all" presented a document which gathered information on supply and demand of accessible tourism, targeting users and operators in the tourism sector. The document, successfully produced by CO.IN, had a great impact and thanks to support from the Government's Department for Social Affairs and many sector associations, it was printed and distributed in ten thousands of copies.

From this point onwards, the initiatives increased both in number and size. These initiatives included e.g. the European CARE project, European cooperation through ENAT, the Charter of Rights for Tourists in 2001 introduced by the Italian government, the Commission for the Promotion and Support for Accessible Tourism and the resulting adoption of the Manifest for the Promotion of Accessible Tourism in 2009. Furthermore, a white paper on accessible tourism was adopted in 2012 aiming to further promote accessibility<sup>3</sup>.

This brief introduction of the national context has given us an overview indicating a significant tourism sector in a country where the interest and awareness in regards to accessible tourism have grown stronger since the mid-1990s. This overview has also demonstrated that the association CO.IN has had an important role in this development. The following pages will present a case study on the Italian non-profit organisation CO.IN (Cooperative Integrate Onlus) which works to enable different opportunities for people with disabilities. In particular, we will focus on Tandem, one of CO.IN's members which is principally active in the field of accessible tourism. CO.IN and Tandem have initiated and participated in a great number of training initiatives and we have selected one of these for this case study. We will focus on the EU.FOR.ME project, an EC funded project concerning training for trainers in the field of accessible tourism, which was successfully carried out in Italy in 2005-2006. The project had an interesting, two-folded scope and a somewhat original outline. The main objective of this training was to define and develop training material for trainers in accessible tourism, through a training of young students while forming them to become trainers.

In a first step, a background will be provided covering CO.IN and the work of Tandem. Upon this, the EU.FOR.ME training will be presented and investigated, building upon various interviews conducted with professionals, organisers and participants involved in

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<sup>2</sup> Agenzia Nazionale per le Nuove Tecnologie, l'Energia e lo Sviluppo Economico Sostenibile (National Agency for New Technology, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development)

<sup>3</sup> Libro Bianco, 2012

this project. In addition, impact and effects of the training course will be assessed and discussed leading up to conclusions and recommendations, with a particular focus on what the European Commission could do in order to promote accessible tourism in regards to training throughout the European Union (EU).

## **2.0 OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **CO.IN**

The non-profit organisation CO.IN was established in Rome, Italy in 1995. The organisation consists of 26 social cooperatives with the general common aim of improving working opportunities for people with disabilities. The members promote social and economic integration of these people and work for autonomy and an independent lifestyle through various projects and services in regards to accessible tourism, consulting activities, research and national and international cooperation.

The consortium is a research centre and development agency for social enterprises<sup>4</sup>. CO.IN has worked in the field of tourism since many years and has acquired significant knowledge and experience through projects at national and international level regarding accessibility and mobility. One of these projects which has been particularly important is the “Italia per tutti” (“Italy for all”), which was mentioned in the previous section. This project was commissioned by the Department of Tourism of the Italian government. The project was set up in 1997 to promote and improve tourism conditions for people with disabilities.

Since the 1990s, COIN has been developing guides for disabled people for travelling and tourism in Rome and the Latium region. These guides were later on made available to a wider public through the website of the region in the framework of the project “Roma per tutti” (Rome for all). Another result of this project, was a database providing extensive information and guides.

One of the central initiatives of CO.IN is the establishment of a front office for accessible tourism providing information on accessibility to people with reduced mobility through a call centre of expert operators. Among the various initiatives, different trainings and courses in accessible tourism have been organised on a wide range of levels.

The training and projects performed by CO.IN sometimes build on their own initiatives, and sometimes they are required by companies or public authorities. Depending on the

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<sup>4</sup> Enterprises with at least 30% of the employees having disabilities.

requirements of these customers, a certificate may be given at the end of the course, if they are allowed to provide such a certificate. According to the customer's needs and requirements, CO.IN develops and adapts the material of the course, making it an online or lecture/classroom training.

CO.IN's work within the field of accessible tourism developed particularly due to their cooperation with disabled people. Improving the working conditions for disabled people, and working together with people with specific needs made it clear that these people have dream destinations and want to go on holidays like anyone else. For this to be possible and facilitated, they require a different kind of extensive information, specific guides and so on. CO.IN is in particular focusing on this, in combination with the importance of hospitality and the relational aspect. It is not merely the information that counts, but it is crucial how this information is communicated, before and during holidays, through websites and by front office staff.

## **TANDEM**

As mentioned above, CO.IN consists of various social cooperatives. One of these is Tandem which was founded in 1997, following the EU project HORIZION in 1996. The project promoted occupation and work for disabled people and was organised by CO.IN. Today, Tandem has 40 members (most of them with disabilities) and work towards the main objective of providing information in the field of accessible tourism as well as regarding rights of people with disabilities. This information is disseminated through a call centre, covering the entire Italian territory, as well as through various trainings and other initiatives.

The particular advantage of Tandem is the national scope of the information service. It covers the whole of Italy and is not limited to a smaller territory like a region or a city. In comparison to many other countries, this is a rare service in this context. Information is generally available, but the different websites containing the information need to be identified, whereas Tandem works as a database covering the national territory.

Tandem is also working with awareness raising and information in schools aiming to increase the awareness among young people. These kinds of initiatives are financed by municipalities, as well as on regional level and by the Ministry of Economic Development.

Tandem, as an organisation has not encountered many obstacles in regards to the national context, legislative framework, and negative attitudes, according to the information collected in our interviews. The fact of being part of a bigger and recognised organisation with an already existing network, has facilitated the development of Tandem. Since projects are often offered through calls for proposal, CO.IN has also had a crucial role in assisting in the preparation of these tenders. Currently the economic and political situation in Italy is difficult and the calls for



proposals, which Tandem is depending on, has decreased. The political and economic national context was more favourable in the period when the association was established.

**Table 1: Trainings and initiatives lead by CO.IN/Tandem**

Project title	Description	Year
HORIZION	Employment programme finance by the European Union and the Italian Ministry of Labour, with the objective of training 10 disabled people as “tourist destination specialists”. Tandem was created at the end of the project.	1996/1997
Roma per tutti	A database was developed by CO.IN with the aim of covering the accessibility for tourists in the city of Rome and the Latium region. It provides guides and extensive information on accessibility. Online courses in accessible tourism were also made available on the region’s website following the EU.FOR.ME project (see below) <sup>5</sup> .	2000 – on-going
Superabile	Together with INAIL, an association for people who were injured at work resulting in disabilities, a contact centre and documentation portal were created. The information concerns accessibility in general, in relation to school, work, free time and so on, and contains an extensive FAQ of 20 different sections (including free time and travelling) <sup>6</sup> .	2000
DILATT – Leonardo Programme Project	Distance learning for accessible tourism technicians, pilot project to train tourism technicians able to understand and meet the needs of people with disabilities when travelling.	2000/2002
Training for airport staff	Training of staff with the objective to facilitate the access of disabled people to the airport of Fiumicino (Rome) and aircrafts.	1997
Course for the Ministry of	Online course on accessible conditions and on how to measure/inspect them, following an	-

<sup>5</sup> [www.presidiolazio.it](http://www.presidiolazio.it)

<sup>6</sup> [www.superabile.it](http://www.superabile.it)

Cultural Heritage	initiative from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage. An online training system was developed for the ministry.	
Progettare per tutti	Post-laurea training for architects and engineers in the University of Rome. The participation was voluntary, both students and companies participated and received a certificate by the end of the training.	1999
ENAT CETA	The project aims at sustaining SMEs operating in the tourism sector in order to help them to become more sustainable and competitive by making their products accessible to all, including tourists with specific needs. Online training modules and a system of auto-evaluation of knowledge were developed.	2009/2010
Life Long Learning Transfer of Innovation Project ITTI	Objective of transferring products and results from various European projects already completed, to the Slovenian tourism situation. The EU.FOR.ME project is being employed for this project. Awareness raising among young people in schools, providing information on accessibility.	2011
EU.FOR.ME	Training for trainers in accessible tourism. Objective of training the participants and developing skills that could be used for teaching in universities and high schools if/when this type of training offer in accessible tourism would be/is made available and included in the mainstream academic educational plan of e.g. tourism schools; and of developing a training module directly deliverable for universities and high school courses.	2004-2006

### 3.0 CONTENT, TRAINING MATERIAL AND AVAILABILITY

This section will present the EU.FOR.ME training which was performed 2004-2006. Due to the various types of trainings provided by CO.IN and Tandem, this case study has aimed to identify one example which has been particularly successful and important. The EU.FOR.ME was a unique initiative with the objective to provide training for trainers and to develop new adapted training material through this training by the

participants. The project was carried out successfully and has had various important impacts for the sector as well as for the people involved.

### EU.FOR.ME – “training for trainers”

The main objective of this training course which was organised by CO.IN/Tandem in cooperation with a number of other European organisations, was to define a “training for trainer” course module in the framework of the Tourism for All concept, to improve and complete the curricula of schools, universities and training centres in Europe offering courses in tourism. The participating organisations had identified this considerable gap in the existing tourism training: almost no training institutions offered training modules in accessible tourism. By inserting and promoting accessible tourism as part of the training modules in the mainstream education system all over Europe, the general awareness and knowledge would increase importantly, and students would be able to take accessible tourism into account for their future career choice.

As a consequence, the training had two goals, i.e. to train the participants and develop skills that could be used for teaching and training in universities and high schools if/when this type of training offer was made available and included in the mainstream academic educational plans of tourism schools; and to develop an 80 hours module of training directly deliverable for universities and high school courses.

The initial thoughts around this project originated from a previous cooperation between CST and Tandem where they had discussed the lack of this kind of training in Italy, but also in other European countries, and as a consequence the lack of trainers capable of delivering training in accessible tourism. The European perspective made this issue particularly apt for being addressed through a European project. The project was made possible in 2004 through European funding (DG EAC, Joint Actions) and Tandem had the role of coordinator throughout the project.

**Table 2: Project participants**

Name of organisation	Type	Country
CO.IN/Tandem (coordinator)	Association	Italy
Centro Italiano di Studi Superiori sul Turismo e sulla Promozione Turistica di Assisi (CST)	Business School for tourism. In collaboration with the University of Perugia, CST offers a degree course in Tourism Economics	Italy
Youth Action for Peace Italia	Association	Italy
Umbria Training Center	Non-profit cultural association	Italy
Provincia di Perugia	Province	Italy
Comune di Assisi	Municipality	Italy

Neumann Consult	Consultancy – urban, regional, tourism development, and accessibility	Germany
I.P.F. Iniciativas de Proyectos de Formacion	Consultancy offering training and education services	Spain
Info-Handicap Centre Natioonal d’Information et de Rencontre du Handicap	National information centre, association consisting of 53 organisations working with accessibility.	Luxembourg
Turism for Alla	Association	Sweden

### Content of training

The project started out with an extensive analysis of the needs of tourists with disabilities. A panel of young people with specific needs was selected that followed the whole project with the aim of identifying these needs. Based on the panel’s conclusions and the needs analysis, a training course for trainers was developed and performed.

The training course was made available to 16 participants. The course consisted in a total of 200 hours of classroom/lecture training with an additional 80 hours of practical training where the participants were divided into four working groups, each one aiming to design project works or course material that could be used for training in accessible tourism. The project covered only one phase of training, thus the training has not been continued. However, the training material developed has been made available through various means (websites, dissemination seminars, newsletters created during the course<sup>7</sup> and other projects). The course was carried out in the Centre of Tourism Studies of Assisi during a few months.

**Table 3: The four steps of the training activity**

Steps	Content
Step 1 – Training of trainers	The aim of this stage was to provide the participants with interpersonal communications skills and concrete instruments to plan and provide training processes. It also provided insights in accessible tourism and related issues, the role of the professional figure as well as knowledge about safety in the workplace.
Step 2 – The tourism system	This part of the training offered an outline of the features of the tourism scenario and sector in general,

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.euforme.net/documents/>, (accessed 22/10/2013)

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	its functioning and the tourism distribution processes.
Step 3 – The trainer of tourism for all	This step entered into detail in regards to accessible tourism, and the requirements concerning the professional activity in this sector and the specialised training on the topic of tourism for all.
Step 4 – Project works	This stage involved practical work rather than lectures, with the objective of applying the skills acquired throughout the training. The participants were divided into four different groups, each one with the mission of developing training modules on different themes related to accessible tourism. The aim of this stage was furthermore to prepare a product that could be inserted into study plans, educational programmes or experimental laboratories. Throughout this stage, the participants were tutored by the European partners of the project as well as by the Panel of young people with disabilities.

Throughout the training which was organised over XX months, two intermediate tests were held of two hours each. The first one aimed at evaluating the degree of learning of the topics presented and analysed in the two first training stages, whereas the second test aimed at verifying the degree of learning in the third phase of the training. In regards to the forth and concluding phase of the training, classroom training was organised with the students/participants presenting their project works by giving the training in a lecture through the material developed as a result of the training.

### **Trainers and training material**

Various types and categories of trainers and professors were involved in the performance of this training. Both in IT and communication for the part of the training on communication and training in general, as well as trainers from CST providing the training phase on the tourism industry. Furthermore, trainers from Tandem provided the training section on accessible tourism, e.g. an architect from TANDEM held a lecture about structures and construction and related techniques in regards to accessibility.

The training material used for this project consisted in powerpoint presentations and existing material previously developed by Tandem and CST for other trainings. A value added to the training was the more practical and interactive part. For example, the architect presented a collection of data on accessible structures providing concrete examples known to the students, a blind person was invited to talk about his own testimony, and a tour was organised in Assisi together with a person in a wheelchair. The objective of these practical steps was to present real and concrete situations to the students to increase their understanding of tourists with disabilities and the difficulties that they encounter.

## **4.0 TARGET AUDIENCE, COMMUNICATIONS AND BARRIERS**

### **Target**

The selection of trainees encouraged young people with disabilities to apply and had the ambition to involve young people with and without disabilities who could become trainers in the framework of “Tourism for all”. Students and graduates from tourism institutes were equally encouraged to apply, as well as experts in disability travels. The age of the final participants was 20-25, and most of the 16 participants came from the Tourism Economics course at the University of Perugia. Participants were selected on the basis of requirements such as knowledge of English, knowledge of the tourism sector, as well as through a selection interview.

### **Communication and barriers**

In the setting up and implementation of the project, the consortium did not encounter particular obstacles or barriers. The interest for the project was high and it was easy to find both participants as well as people for the focus groups/expert panel. Furthermore, the dissemination conferences that were organised following the training also received a high interest and participation. Within the consortium, which involved various European partners, the cooperation and coordination went well thanks to the interest and commitment of organisers, trainees, stakeholders and other involved, as well as the cooperation of external parts.

In the fourth section of the training, the participants were divided up into four working groups, each one tutored by one of the project partners on a distance. I.e. the students worked independently in Italy and were followed by a partner in Germany, Spain, Luxembourg or Sweden. Due to the distance, the groups encountered some problems of communication, and it was reports by both students and tutors that this part of the training could have been improved through an online forum or another type of organisation. However, the difficulties encountered resulted in the organisation of a third meeting involving all the participants which proved to be beneficial to everyone involved.

According to CO.IN, the Ministry of Tourism has shown great interest in CO.IN's and Tandem's activity. The Commission on Accessibility set up in 2009, also demonstrates an increased interest coming from the national institutions. However, the instability of the Italian government has made the work somewhat problematic and unstable. As a result the Commission has not been meeting up regularly. The initial work had good results and according to our interviews, topics are ready to be picked up on as soon as the political situation is stabilised.

A great number of dissemination and communication activities were performed in the framework of the project and given central importance through e.g. the organisation of conferences, seminars and various information documents. The different European partners participated in this and could as a result reach out to different actors across Europe thanks to the different countries of origin, and the varying characters of the partners (i.e. association, NGO, education, tourism). The dissemination was in particular focused on presenting the project and its results and to inform interested groups in order for them start their own similar projects. There was also a specific focus on involving economic and social actors.

In addition to this, the course material developed has been used in various contexts, and these documents together with other information relative to the project are available on the website which is still alive almost 10 years after the start of the project.

## **5.0 EVIDENCE OF IMPACT**

According to all the interviews conducted with people involved in this project, EU.FOR.ME has had and still has an important impact in the sector of accessible tourism. The impact and improvements are difficult to measure in numbers, however, all the interviewees reported an increased awareness in general regarding accessible tourism as a result of this project's contribution. CST has also noticed an increasing awareness among the people working in the sector, e.g. hotels that are associated with CST. There has also been an increasing number of initiatives focused on training in Italy. International institutions like UNWTO, EC, EP, DG ENTR, have been, and continue to be crucial actors. Furthermore, the material developed throughout the course has been used and re-used in different contexts, several of the participants have continued working in the sector of accessible tourism, or at least as trainers, and a course module was developed and temporarily inserted in the educational plan of the tourism degree in the University of Perugia.

- **Use of the course material/project work**

The course material developed throughout the training for trainers has been used in different context and remains available for anyone on the website of the project<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, the material was used in the development of the Latium region's online training in accessible tourism which is available through their website<sup>9</sup>. The material has also been used in different conferences, by a Spanish training entity and in the ITTI project<sup>10</sup>. The objective of this ITTI project is to transfer products and results of different European projects to the

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<sup>8</sup> [www.euforme.net](http://www.euforme.net) , (accessed 22/10/2013)

<sup>9</sup> [www.presidiolazio.it](http://www.presidiolazio.it) , (accessed 22/10/2013)

<sup>10</sup> Improving Accessibility through Training in Tourism (ITTI)

Slovenian tourism situation. The results from EU.FOR.ME has been successfully applied to this project.

The project works developed through the 80 hours of practical work are divided into the four topics below.

- Customer care methodology for customers with specific needs;
- Accessible destination (accessible tourism and legislative framework in Italy and the EU);
- Accessible tourism product (the supply and services available);
- Promotion and commercialisation of the accessible tourism product.

- **Dissemination**

As mentioned in the previous section, dissemination was an important and integral part of the project. Conferences and seminars were organised to communicate information and results from the project. These conferences were well attended and received a high interest. Furthermore, information newsletters and other documents related to the project were produced, and are still available together with the project works through the EU.FOR.ME website.

- **Participants**

Out of the 16 students participating in the EU.FOR.ME training, 6-7 are still active in the tourism sector with training related issues, and some of them are working with accessibility. One of the participants wrote her final thesis together with one of the professors and the German partner on accessible events. She is currently working on accessible and sustainable conferences. Another participant works with “Village for All” – a special camping organisation in Italy, for people with disabilities, which was founded by Roberto Vitali.

- **Course module in Accessible Tourism**

Even within the CST there was previously a limited knowledge related to this issue. The EU.FOR.ME project has had an important impact and the results are regularly used and integrated increasingly in other training modules at the school. CST now aims to insert in each course provided, a module of 8-10 hours on accessible tourism.

A course module of 1 credit was inserted in the educational plan of the degree course in tourism organised jointly by CST and the University of Perugia. Due to schedule-related problems and lack of space in the timetable, this only lasted for one year. Our interviewees have expressed this as a great result but also as a disappointment because of the limited amount of time that it lasted. They have all highlighted that this should be taken up again and needs to be given priority.



## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

In this case study we have looked at the Italian context focusing on the association CO.IN and its member Tandem. We have presented the accessible tourism project EU.FOR.ME which was carried out jointly by these two organisations together with other Italian and European partners. The project was made possible through European funding and had as its main objective to provide training for trainers in accessible tourism to 16 participants, and as a result of this training develop training material on this topic which could potentially be used by universities and high schools and inserted in the education planning for tourism courses.

The project was carried out successfully, providing a training which was designed after a thorough analysis of needs for tourists with disabilities. The training consisted in different part where the first one provided theory about training in general, the tourism sector and accessible tourism. The final part of the training was practical and divided the students into four different groups. Within the groups the students had to develop project works which were to be presented as a final result, taking the appearance of a complete lecture in accessible tourism. These project works remain available through the EU.FOR.ME website to be used and integrated into tourism courses.

The design of this project is particularly interesting since it aims for a twofold result, consisting both in training and a training material. The practical part of the training had good results and seems to have involved the students to a high extent. According to the interviews conducted, a great interest from both students and partners was noted throughout the training and project. The only drawback mentioned was the lack of communication due to the distance tutoring and lack of efficient communication through for example an online portal or forum, instead of e-mail exchange. However, despite this, partners and students seem to have been satisfied with the training and several of the participants continued working with tourism training and in the field of accessible tourism.

Training material was successfully developed and has been used in different contexts, e.g. through the website of the Latium region where it has been integrated in the online course on accessible tourism. The material also contributed to the course module which was inserted in the educational programme of the tourism degree at the University of Perugia, however, this module only lasted for one year and was then suspended due to lack of space and priority given to other modules and lecturers. It seems reasonable to say that this project resulted in great potential which still remains unexploited. The training material could be used in other contexts and introduced as a compulsory module both in tourism degrees but also in degrees in architecture or design. The difficulty here seems to be that the universities and schools are not flexible enough and are not ready to give up other courses to the favour of accessible tourism.

The project involved various actors from different contexts. From Italy, representatives both from the province of Perugia and the municipality of Assisi participated. This demonstrates a great interest for this topic on the national level in Italy, and indicates an understanding of its significance. Italy is one of the most important tourist destinations in the world, which is probably an important reason to the investments made for accessible tourism on the national level.

In order to conclude this case study we have suggested some recommendations based on the information collected and the analysis performed in these pages.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**






The ultimate aim of this project was to fill the gap identified in various tourism degrees, and to offer a training for trainers, but also to develop training material that could be used, applied and adapted to universities and high schools offering degrees and education in tourism and hospitality. The project was carried out successfully, the participants received a valuable training and contributed significantly to the development of new training material. There have been important impacts, however, it is crucial that the results obtained are not lost. Therefore, we would suggest the following recommendations building on the information collected throughout this case study, the interviews conducted and the resulting analysis.

- Introduce compulsory training modules in accessible tourism in high schools and universities which are offering courses and degrees in tourism and hospitality. Furthermore, degrees in architecture and design is another field where this type of training course is required. The training needs to be introduced at an early stage, not only at the work place. This would better prepare people working in the tourism sector, and it would also give students in tourism a wider choice for their future career. Member states of the EU need to be encouraged to include this type of training. As we have seen from this example, it is common that the timetables are already set and that it is difficult to fit in a new module. Priority is given to other subjects, and lecturers want to keep their courses. The European Commission could improve this situation by encouraging the EUMS to introduce a compulsory course module in accessible tourism. There are some courses on this topics, however, they are mostly connected to the legislative framework, while ignoring many other aspects that were taken up in the EU.FOR.ME project.
- Following the previous point, a European curriculum at university level in accessible tourism would be a crucial development. The course module could be made in the same way in the different countries, certainly subject to adaptations due to a varying national context, however, still covering the other EU Member States. This would enable people working in the tourism industry to be more flexible and to work in accessible tourism in different countries.

- European projects bring added value and have had important impacts in this field throughout the years. New projects are required in order for the development of the sector to continue, and projects are in particular valuable for multiplying those who work in the sector, to increase the understanding of the topics and of which topics need to be included in the training provided. Projects are also generally required to encourage the exchange of experiences, ideas and knowledge between Member States. Furthermore, the EU projects enable training on different levels building on cooperation involving various countries, for both end-users and for trainers themselves.
- Funding and support are still required to promote further training, and this is something that the Commission could provide and assist with. Furthermore, funding programmes could also encourage universities to introduce compulsory courses and other entities to carry out projects similar to EU.FOR.ME.
- Another potential training for channels that could possibly be exploited more as a way of reaching out to a great number of actors is the category associations such as Fed Alberghi in Italy. This kind of organisation is capable of organising and providing trainings in this area, reaching out to various actors and companies.
- Introduction of harmonised standards in regards to accessible structures in order to have the same measurements for rooms, beds and so on in different countries. These details are crucial to know in advance for a disabled person. If these measures are different in different countries, it becomes cumbersome for a disabled person to prepare the travelling. It is also central to provide information on all levels, e.g. structures, reception, guides.
- Awareness-raising remains essential for this field. There have been improvements in Italy, however the society in Europe in general is more open, prepared, and used to disabled people and how to handle these issues. Disabled people are part of society, and should be part without any complications. In order for this situation to improve, in Italy and throughout Europe, training is crucial.

8.0 ANNEX I

Table 4: Criteria and justification for best practice

Criteria	Justification	On track/off track
<b>Innovative</b>	The training has been designed in an innovative way, aiming to provide a training for future trainers, while the students develop training material which could be inserted in e.g. a university degree course or other accessible tourism training. A system with distance tutoring from European partners is also an innovative detail.	
<b>Relevant</b>	The aim of the training is to address the gap of accessible tourism training which has been identified in various tourist schools and trainings throughout Europe.	
<b>Transferable</b>	The aim of the training was to develop transferable training material, which was done successfully. The training could be made transferable as well, but was not designed for that purpose.	
<b>Efficient &amp; Effectiveness</b>	The trainings was effective in terms of the outcomes registered, however, the distance tutoring seems to have encountered some difficulties. In terms of cost efficiency, it was similar to a “traditional” training.	
<b>Impact</b>	The training had important impacts, but which were difficult to measure, since the training was designed to be held only once. There has been impact of the material developed, however, these results of the training could be further used.	
<b>Sustainable</b>	The course was designed to be held only once. Therefore, the sustainability has not been good. The training material developed is, however, sustainable, and could be used further.	