Interreg Italia–Österreich
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PLACES

Equal Opportunities Policy

PLACES. Promoting Landscape, Accessibility and Culture for Experiential and Sustainable Tourism

lapiccionaia centro di produzione teatrale
independent VITA INDIPENDENTE E MOBILITÀ SELBSTBESTIMMTES LEBEN UND MOBILITÄT
il Tarvisiano
Città di Vicenza
LANDES MUSEUM KÄRNTEN
KÄRNTEN Werbung

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1. Introduction

This Equal Opportunities Policy outlines the principles and commitments of the PLACES project partnership to promote equitable access and full participation for all individuals, including those with permanent or temporary motor, sensory and cognitive disabilities, as well as families with children, the elderly and foreign people. This Policy reflects the project's dedication to fostering accessibility across physical, digital, and social dimensions. It is based on the accessibility and equal opportunity principles outlined in the PLACES project framework.

The measures defined in this Policy are applied continuously throughout the project to combat all potential forms of discrimination that may arise during the implementation of project activities.

This Policy aims to provide a set of useful guidelines to ensure that all project activities are accessible and inclusive and that the consortium will endeavour to remove any barriers that prevent participation due to physical, cognitive, sensory or social differences.

2. Values and Commitments

Equal opportunities, accessibility and inclusiveness are key elements in the sustainable tourism promoted in the PLACES project.

PLACES embraces the "design for all" or “universal design” methodology, which aims to create environments, products, and services that are accessible to all individuals, including those with specific needs related to motor, sensory, or cognitive abilities. This approach recognizes diversity and values the uniqueness of each person as a central element of project design and implementation, putting in place all possible measures to remove obstacles to the participation of any individual for reasons of gender, religion and personal beliefs, race and ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual and political orientation, in order to contribute to improving the standard of living and quality of life, economic and social cohesion, solidarity and the free movement of persons.

The PLACES partnership is aware that, for all people to have equal opportunities for participation and access to museum sites and cultural activities, the built environment, services, culture and information must be accessible and responsive to human diversity.

3. Tools and Methods

To achieve these objectives, the PLACES partnership will adopt the following practical measures:

- Implementation of structural improvements in pilot sites to facilitate access for individuals with motor, sensory, or cognitive disabilities. This includes both physical, digital and experiential devices.
- Ensuring that digital content, including websites and online platforms, meets recognized accessibility standards.
- Implementation of digital solutions for accessibility (e.g. of virtual tours with accessible Points of Interests)
- Addressing architectural and environmental obstacles to create welcoming and navigable spaces for all participants, ensuring compliance with the principles of accessible tourism.
- Regularly assess the implementation of equal opportunity concerns through feedback exchange during TPMs.
- Adopt inclusive communication and use inclusive language and imagery that reflects the dignity of all interlocutors. Please, refer to the Guideline for inclusive language developed by the project partner Independent L.

4. Duration

This policy is effective for the entire duration of the PLACES project and applies to all individuals and organizations involved.

The PLACES partnership remains committed to continuous improvement and the active promotion of Equal Opportunities throughout all project phases.

5. Definitions

- *Accessibility*: the quality of being easily usable, reachable, and understandable by all individuals, regardless of physical, sensory, cognitive, or social abilities.
- *Design for All / Universal design:* an inclusive design approach that aims to create products, environments and services that can be used by everyone, regardless of their abilities, age or circumstances.
- *Digital Inclusion*: the practice of ensuring equitable access to digital technologies and information for all individuals, particularly those with disabilities.
- *Ableism*: ableism refers to beliefs or practices that assume being able-bodied is the standard or "normal," while any other condition is seen as something that needs to be changed or "fixed." This mindset can lead to devaluation or discrimination against individuals with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities.

- *Barrier-Free Environment*: a physical, digital, and social environment designed to eliminate obstacles to full participation and access.

7. References and resources

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Goal 11 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11
- European Accessibility Act (2019/882/EU) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019L0882
- EUSALP (EU Strategy for the Alpine Region) on accessibility and inclusion https://alpine-region.eu/about/strategy
- COME-IN! (Interreg Central Europe 2014-2020) https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/COME-IN.html
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/

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