



**visits4u Case Studies:
The MateraMare Project
Matera, Italy**

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Matera, Italy

Title: From Matera to the Sea: accessible itineraries and destination



Description

Matera is a city and a province in the region of Basilicata, in Southern Italy. It is the capital of the province of Matera and the capital of Basilicata from 1663 to 1806. The town lies in a small canyon carved out by the Gravina.

Known as "la Città Sotterranea" (the Subterranean City), its historical centre "Sassi", along with the Park of the Rupestrian Churches, is considered a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1993.

Less than 70 years ago, thousands of people in the city were living in dwellings with no natural light, ventilation, running water or electricity. Over the following decades, Matera has developed and completely rebranded itself, becoming a cultural and historic landmark of the region and a rapidly growing tourism destination. In 2014 it was nominated as one of Europe's Capitals of Culture for 2019.

Becoming inclusive:

1. Description

In this context, the MateraMare project was born: a project about accessibility and regional touristic accessibility linked to the city of Matera. The project is based on identifying, mapping and data processing in relation to the theme of Matera's accessibility linked to the two seas of Basilicata Region: the Ionian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea. It is part of an overall vision that wants to suggest routes that can be suitable for people with disabilities. The aim is also to improve the availability from the logical, architectural, technological and informational point of view.

2. Description of steps taken, changes and progress

Methodology

a) Territory Analysis

The group started from Matera, and across the region reaching the Basilicata Seas: the Ionian Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea. Choosing a starting point and an arrival, they have designed itineraries in the city as well as at the throughout the region, which are characterized by the quality of the accessibility offered by the sites.

b) Concept of accessibility

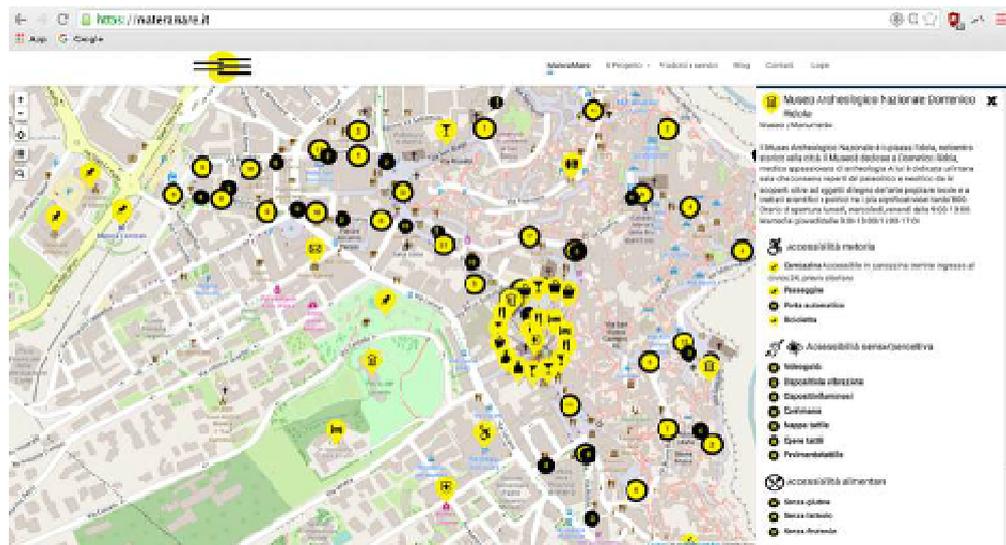
It is a theme that permeates human life in various stages of life (with different conditions or abilities) and the physical space related to the travel and to the experience

The questions that the project aimed to address were:

- what is accessible and for whom?
- what is the level of difficulty?
- what is the problem?
- is it possible to resolve it and how?

Products:

a) A web platform developed as a tool to analyze accessibility related to a specific territory.



The tool used to search for "accessible places" of Matera and of the two coasts, it comes from the open source technology: Open Street Map (*). The tool is available via this link: www.materamare.it. It contains a platform with information on accessibility, some data collected until now refer to existing ratings on open street map, some others are related to new categories.

Both classes of categories are implementable and editable by everyone, it is easy to read and understand, zooming in and out. Periodically, the data will pass from the MateraMare platform to the Open Street Map in accordance with the methods provided by the system. To ensure the reliability of the data, these are verified before being placed online on the platform.

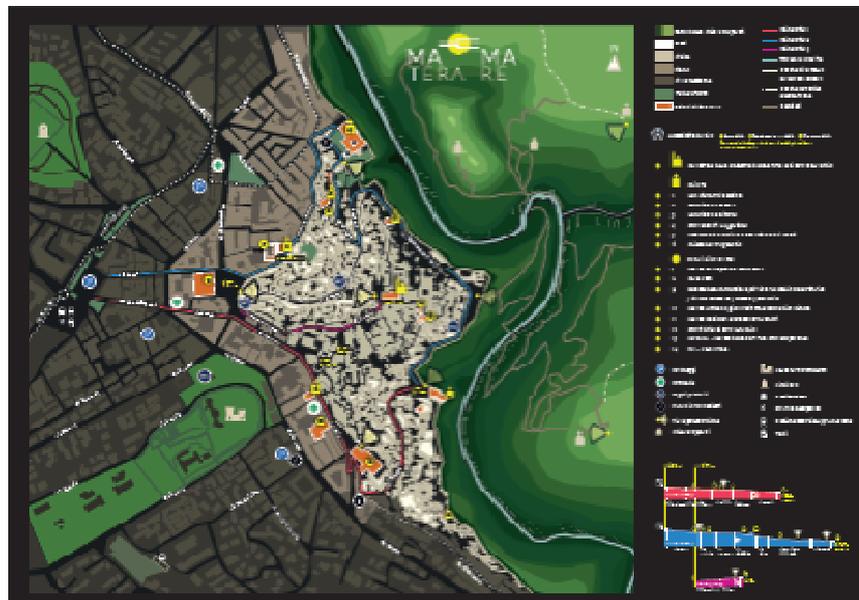
Some of the platform's features:

- It is useful to everyone.
- It is based on Open Street Map. It has no boundaries. From Matera the visitor can reach all seas that connect to the city and meet certain access requirements.
- It is an instrument of analysis for those who intend to undertake an entrepreneurial initiative.
- It is easy to use both in insertion and in consultation.
- It is licensed open cc-by-sa. Everyone can use it, implement it by enjoying the work done and helping to increase orientation and actions to improve accessibility and full enjoyment of places.
- It provides the input to intervene with improvements on cultural and tourist containers.

b) Physical travel tools such as maps, designed to give clear and readable information in terms of print size and utility:

- City Map

The information collected was used to build a first map of the city of Matera. This map gives an overview of the accessibility of the city today. It is a good base that gives an intelligible image of the urban fabric by qualifying the paths around the theme of accessibility. The front of the map shows the city, the itineraries and slopes, the location of the places of interest and the distance.



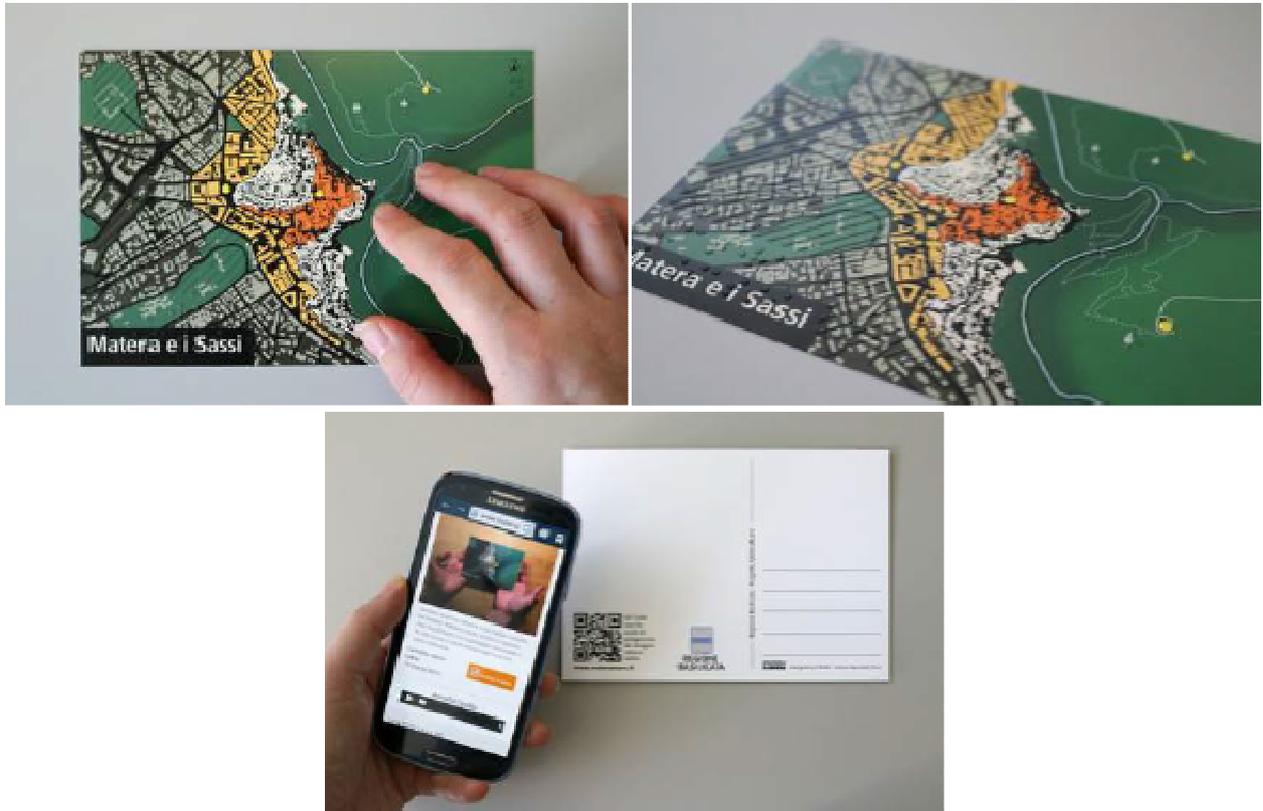
Some of its features:

- the paths without stairs are highlighted with reference to slopes and the location of the places of interest; the cargo access point and the station.
- orientation information
- colour coding: Matera in Sassi is indicated with a bright colour. The green colour to indicate the gravina and the canyon also help with orientation. The colour contrast also improves readability of the map

- Tactile postcards

A postcard of Matera that illustrates the connection that Sassi and the historic centre of Matera have with the city and the surrounding landscape. The visual element of the postcards had been superimposed

over the tactile signs. On the back of the postcard there is a QR code with which the postcard holder can connect to with the multimedia content of the linked text.



- Tactile map of the Marina di Ginosa (60 x 80cm)

The map has two layers: the visual one, which provides good visual contrast to make it readable for many visually impaired people. The second layer is tactile that corresponds to some of the visual information: morphology and topography of the territory, the main points of interest and contact information.

The QR code links to audio information about the story of the map, such as information about history and the points of interest.





4. Main stakeholders / actors

The project was founded by the Collective C-FARA, founded in 2013 by a group of professionals such as architects, graphic designers, economists, photographers under the age of 40 gathered. Their goal was to develop projects aimed at improving the accessibility and accessibility of culture and cities for people of all ages or conditions. The motivation was to work together to improve the cultural and tourist offer that Matera can offer, and therefore turn the city into a welcoming destination for everyone.



All C-FARA products are shared in CC-BY-SA by fostering the development of community of professionals working on inclusion issues; through the combination of many disciplines, the collective is able to deal in a concrete and effective way with such a fascinating and complex, as well, issue of usability and materialise the plan where everyone, including disabled people, can enjoy the tourist and cultural offer of the Italy's European Capital of Culture for 2019. The growth of accessibility culture and the improvement of existing building heritage are in fact a cultural innovation that sets the foundations for the future.

Results and Impact

The results and the impact on territory is good.

The collective's work and the platforms help tourism businesses understand that they can have accessible and inclusive room and space as part of their regular offer and that they don't have to give up to have an aesthetically charming space.

This awareness is very important because tourism and beauty must come together.

Also, a bad interpretation of law can cause a lot of problems; in Italy unfortunately there is no regular school providing architects any training on inclusive design. As a result, the spaces that are created as 'accessible' are separated from the 'mainstream' provision

The Collective feel that they almost create a type of a "short circuit" when they show that disabled tourists can and should have an enjoyable experience if the space and services are inclusive.

The Collective has not found at the moment a way to know how many people with disability are visiting Matera, but they are working to demolish the preconception that this a city inaccessible!

Lessons learnt

Through this work the team learn something everyday.

The biggest lesson that we learnt is that is necessary to put the human "inside" and in the middle of architecture and this work make it clear.

The architects are really not enough to solve the human problem that often comes from not having suitable inclusive and social spaces.

The thought that we share with people that we meet is that if more people can enjoy your space, more people will come to you.

Further information

Project website: www.materamare.it

C-FARA Collective: www.c-fara.com | www.mesonro.it



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