

Development of the digital tourism project “Camminiemiliaromagna.it”

Introduction

The experimental digital project entitled “Camminiemiliaromagna.it” was started as part of the Experiential Tourism of the Pilgrims’ Ways, dedicated to the promotion of slow tourism, developed in 2015 by *Apt Servizi* (Tourist Promotion Company) in agreement with the Regional Department of Trade and Tourism. The project is in line with the directive of the Ministry of Cultural Assets and Activities (*MIBACT*) which announced 2016 as the year of “Trails in Italy” aimed at the promotion of schemes for development of the sector, utilisation of these trails and the production of a digital Atlas of the Trails of Italy, determining the guidelines and relative lines of action.

Objectives

To develop Emilia-Romagna as an area rich in religious interest and the strategic passage of ancient pilgrims’ ways and trade routes meeting the specific needs for development of the area, its operators and stakeholders from the viewpoint of slow tourism.

To enhance the tourist value of the area, boosting local economies, differentiating, qualifying and/or re-qualifying the regional tourism offer with the creation of a specific slow experiential tourism offer which is attractive to the domestic, European and non-European markets.

Culture, spirituality, history, nature, food and wine and tradition from the viewpoint of slow sustainable tourism to develop the host areas and communities.

Procedures and subjects involved

The project activities are conducted through the instrument of the *Technical Panel of Experiential Tourism of the Trails* coordinated by *Apt Servizi*, in agreement with the Department of Tourism of the Emilia-Romagna Region and the involvement of the Regional Tourism Destinations planned for 2018.

In 2016, as part of the regional project, the Agreement between the Department of Religious Affairs, Sport, Leisure and Tourism and the Episcopal Conference of Emilia-Romagna was signed, after which the technical panel on religious tourism was commissioned and meets regularly at the head office of *Apt Servizi*.

MIBACT

Liaison with the Directorate General of the *Mibact* has been set up through the work of the Technical Panel with a focus also on the candidature – for inclusion in the Digital Atlas of Trails – of regional routes. The Atlas, presented last 4 November 2017 in Rome, acknowledged 11 Trails in the Emilia-Romagna

Region: the Abbot's Way, the Francigena Way, the Way of the Gods, the Romea Strata Way in the longobardo nonantolano section, the Romea Nonantolana Way, Saint Anthony's Way, the Romea Germanica Way, the Assisi Way, San Vicinius' Way, Dante's Way, Saint Francis' Way from Rimini to La Verna. In stand by for an upcoming inclusion: Matilda's Way of the Holy Face and the Linari Way.

Action

In this context the digital tourism project "Camminiemiliaromagna.it" sets the objective of creating a web site on the Trails for the purpose of becoming a useful instrument for the promotion and development of the Trails and the areas they pass through in line with the objectives set in the Strategic Plan for Tourism Development of the *Mibact*.

The web site, organised as a simple clear operative interface, offers final users and operators in the sector a number of services, the utilisation of tourist emergency services in the area and information on the Trails. It encourages the distribution of the data available for all web users by means of verification and integration of general data which, through the network of the Trail Associations and local institutions, is transferred to the areas and from these to the Apt together with the production of exclusive data.

The web site and operative interface are set up by collecting the data already available for use in the Emilia-Romagna Region and by using the network for the selection, aggregation, normalisation and dissemination of reprocessed data in an open format through the following actions.

1. the selection of data of a cultural, food and wine, nature and spiritual nature listed in databanks received from regional institutions by *Apt Servizi*, in a buffer area of 5 km from the main route obtained through cooperation with various public bodies and regional institutions including the Mibact, IBC, Regional Department of Agriculture;
2. the production of exclusive data through cooperation with the Episcopal Conference of Emilia-Romagna.
3. successive transfer of the data selected to the network of the local associations and institutions in the areas and successive restitution with their relative collection, aggregation and normalisation
4. activation and supply of an interface that is easy to use for entering events along the trails by the network of associations of the trails and the local institutions in the areas
5. the preparation of documents and collection of permissions for use by the Trails and Institutions involved for the distribution of data in open format
6. the latest issue of specific data provided by the contact persons of the Trails, local institutions and/or obtained freely by *APT Servizi* from the dedicated sites (gpx route tracing, accommodation, services, etc) on the *camminiemiliaromagna.it* site

7. creation of the camminiemiliaromagna.it site consisting of general regional presentation pages and special sections for each trail with exclusive POI data collected after the work done with the territorial networks and dedicated topical sections
8. study and creation of a system of icons dedicated to the information in the site and coordinated graphically in the context of the coordinated image dedicated to the Trails of Emilia-Romagna
9. the use of photographs taken by trail users for weekly updating of the photographic content of the site of the regional hashtag #emiliaromagnaslow and the specific hashtags of the trails which are inserted in the framework of web strategy and social marketing campaigns

The web site and relative platform have open, integrable and interoperable data with the possibility of updating with new significant elements, coordinating and interfacing with the Digital Atlas of the Trails of Italy produced by the General Directorate of the Mibact and with the sites of the single Trails of Emilia-Romagna.

The creation of the experimental project consists of a number of stages:

- 1) Starting phase with the collection of data and first experimental selection of 3 prototype trails, one per destination, on which the digitalisation work has been started;
- 2) Implementation phase of all the various trails taking part in the regional project and consolidation of the work;
- 3) Selection of the data provided by *Apt Servizi*, by the network of Associations of the Trails and the local institutions on the basis of common tourism criteria and later converted into POI;
- 4) Presentation to the Trails organisations of the use of the platform and supply of event interface operating instruments and update of content
- 5) Creation of the web platform, graphic image, content and the completed portal
- 6) Acquisition of consents for the use of the data in open format
- 7) Integrated action of social web communication
- 8) Monitoring of the digital flows and project actions
- 9) In progress – integration with booking of sales services and activity booking

Finally the web site and its content will be included in 2018 in the official site of the Tourism of Emilia-Romagna www.emiliaromagnatourism.it

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Pilgrims' Ways in Emilia-Romagna.