SESSION 22 – GOOD PRACTISES OF DMOS

Moderator: Rachele Paolucci

Speakers: Simon April, Maria Grazia Marini, Monica Tetzner, Alise Lūse and Agnieszka Stokowiecka

The session "Good Practises of DMOs" examined how Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) can drive accessibility and inclusion by coordinating tourism ecosystems across governance levels, sectors, and communities. Moderated by **Rachele Paolucci, AISM, Italy,** the panel brought together practitioners from Canada, Italy, Germany, Latvia, and Switzerland to present real-world examples of inclusive destination management.

Simon April, Director of Training and Advocacy at Kéroul (Canada), introduced the Destination for All framework, a methodology for developing inclusive tourism ecosystems through certification, policy integration, training, and data-driven evaluation. Kéroul's work, in partnership with Quebec's Ministry of Tourism, encompasses over 5,000 evaluated establishments, 100 annual training sessions, and an extensive database of accessible destinations. April stressed that accessibility is not only about physical access but also about service culture, awareness, and governance. The Destination for All programme encourages municipalities to align transport, infrastructure, culture, and hospitality under a single inclusive strategy, promoting progress through incremental improvements and shared learning.

Maria Grazia Marini, Director of Tourism for the Municipality of Ravenna, presented the Italian city's comprehensive approach to accessibility, combining cultural heritage preservation with inclusive tourism planning. Ravenna's UNESCO monuments now feature tactile mosaics, sign language videos, and guided workshops for families and children, developed through collaboration between the Church, State, and Municipality. Beyond heritage, the Parco Marittimo project and the Insieme al Mare accessible resort enable seaside enjoyment for visitors with disabilities. Marini emphasised that accessibility requires not only investments but also time, patience, and participatory planning.

Monica Tetzner, from the Bavaria State Tourism Organisation (Germany), showcased how regional networks can scale accessibility. The Tourism for All labelling system, developed with disability organisations, certifies over 650 Bavarian sites and 2,500 across Germany, covering hotels, museums, hiking routes, and public spaces. Tetzner highlighted the role of DMO-led networks in training, data sharing, and awareness-raising, integrating accessibility across all tourism marketing channels.

Alise Lūse and Agnieszka Stokowiecka presented cross-border interregional projects from the Baltic region and the Alps, focusing on inclusive route development and accessible infrastructure. Lūse described Latvia and Estonia's collaboration on digital accessibility mapping and tactile interpretation tools for nature trails and museums, while Stokowiecka detailed the Inclusive Travel and Experiencing Emotions project, linking Italian and Swiss mountain destinations through accessible trails, training programmes, and multisensory experiences. Both emphasised that accessibility is not a cost but an investment in community well-being and competitiveness.

The session concluded with reflections on shared barriers—fragmentation, lack of coordination, and limited awareness—and a collective call for DMOs to champion inclusion through governance, data, training, and storytelling that reflects real accessibility experiences.

Watch Session 22 on YouTube. (run time 1:19:41)