

# Beyond the Norm, the PEBA to Live in Udine

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**Abstract.** The virtuous objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda look to inclusion and accessibility as matrices for an autonomous and independent life through the regeneration of urban agglomerations. The paper presents the case of the city of Udine which tried to take the opportunity of the PEBA and the consequent programming, to start a process of reviewing the contents, procedures, and interactions between the various administrative offices in a more general framework for the management of goods, spaces, and services. Following the agreement between the University and the Municipality of Udine, the dalt Laboratory has oriented its studies towards research aimed at a structural intervention solution at the beginning of the experimentation on the urban routes of Udine. At the same time, the SWOT survey on the national offices in charge of accessibility and environmental well-being has given rise to research aimed at identifying how many and which offices are dedicated to inclusion as personal services and those committed to environmental accessibility to understand the connection between the bodies supervised by the responsible technical managers. Crossing the norm of accessibility, the paper aims to highlight how the Udine experimentation can shift attention to the expansion of the degree of usability of a place and service by focusing on the promotion of an additive and adaptive process that does not look at the simple removal of barriers but also to a guaranteed awareness of a sharing culture for fair, healthy and safe use of collective goods<sup>2</sup>.

**Keywords.** Accessibility, Social Inclusion, SWOT Survey, Awareness, Regenerative mapping

## 1. Introduction

The virtuous goal of the UN 2030 Agenda looks to inclusion and accessibility as matrices for an autonomous and independent life through the regeneration and transformation of

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<sup>2</sup> This contribution reports some of the results of a research conducted under the responsibility of Christina Conti as part of a broader scientific program and in response to a research agreement between the University of Udine and the Municipality of Udine and an agreement between the FVG Region, the University of Trieste and the University of Udine. The recognition of the single contribution of the authors and the authoritativeness of the texts is attributable to the different roles covered and in particular: Christina Conti of the addresses and the summary of the results, defined the structure of the contents of this contribution supervising the overall drafting with attention to the part 'Introduction' and 'conclusions' and is co-author with Silvia Cioci and Teresa Sambrotta of the paragraph 'Results'. Silvia Cioci, postdoctoral research fellow for the program with the Municipality of Udine, has defined the contents, the general references as well as having carried out the editorial review of the contribution. The commitment of Teresa Sambrotta, research fellow for the program with the FVG region, is attributable to the results related to the actions between the development of the program with the Municipality and the planning of the FVG Region.

urban agglomerations. The policy document that determines the commitments to sustainable development identifies with objective 11 the set of actions aimed at making human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable, also through integrated and participatory planning.

The current demographic dynamics related to the lengthening of life and the rise in the aging population index, together with the desire to intervene in order not to exclude or leave anyone behind, involve more and more attention towards planning aimed at designing accessibility. In line with the scientific debate [1 – 3], the design of inclusion and accessibility should not be considered as a mere regulatory concept, but as an analytical and planning category. Therefore, to improve the degree of accessibility of a place or a service, today it is essential both to deepen the national legislation on the removal of architectural barriers and the promotion of processes aimed at raising awareness of governance and stakeholders in the project experimentation centered on the person and in the recognition of the intrinsic value of social inclusion.

With the legislative provisions n.41/1986, of the law n.13/1989, and subsequent DM 236/1989 there has been a commitment on the part of the administrations to achieve a higher degree of understanding and preparation of objectives intended for the yield accessible and, therefore, inclusive of urbanized contexts. From here, with the L.R. 10/2018, Friuli Venezia Giulia - FVG, wanted to integrate the national legislation and relaunched the Plans for the Elimination of PEBA Architectural Barriers, introduced with Law 41/1986, updating them with respect to the principles of universal design for higher building quality. This entailed an integrated review process also with instrumental interventions, including the PEBA FVG Guidelines for the preparation and implementation of the PEBAs, to support the implementation of the regional monitoring and financing process as well as the implementation by public and private institutions. for public or private spaces and buildings open to the public. The PEBA FVG guidelines published by the FVG region in 2020 are the result of a targeted collaboration of the same Region with the CRIBA single regional reference center, the University of Udine and the University of Trieste are the result of the will to structure an integrated process through complete and dedicated documentation aimed at addressing the issue of accessibility because of a universal design centered on the person.

This is a reminder that wants to activate dynamic paths that take into consideration: (i) the needs of citizens concerning the use of everyday places; (ii) the measures to perceive public and private places open to the public as qualitatively safe, inclusive, and accessible areas; (iii) the fairness, flexibility, simplicity, perceptibility, and error tolerance of public and private places open to the public comparison to the need of citizens [4,5]. What the FVG Guidelines tend to report, stems from the desire to rethink the project to meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities to the maximum extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design typical of Universal design. [6]. A captivating term as an abbreviation to describe the design for all, Universal design becomes for the research in question, an emblematic symbol to signal a milestone in the technical planning dedicated to environmental accessibility and, therefore, social inclusion.

In this regional planning framework, the case of the city of Udine, a provincial capital municipality that has tried to take the opportunity of the PEBA and the consequent programming to start a process of reviewing the contents, procedures, and interactions between the different services to improve the management of public goods, spaces, and services. From the considerations that lead to paying attention to the interaction between space and society and from the vision of urban inclusion as the ability to overlap with

the behavior of society, the administration's choice focused in advance on a cognitive phase of the urban fabric. This first moment allowed accessibility planning that considers the complexity of the development elements as well as the vocation of a city anchored to tradition but with significant potential for the development of the tertiary sector, trade, and tourism in an increasingly amplified interaction with the University both in terms of real estate investments and related derivatives. A preparatory phase for the drafting of the PEBA made it possible to establish the database for strategic planning of the space that guarantees, that is, a direct link between spatial inclusion and social inclusion and to support those choices necessary to make the PEBA an integrated tool for programming not only aimed at the mere removal of architectural barriers.

## **2. Territory experimentation: the Udine the Udine case experience**

### *2.1. Method*

On these premises, the signing of a research agreement between the University of Studies and the Municipality of Udine involved the return of structural intervention solutions at the start of experimentation on urban itineraries identified as fundamental spatial elements for accessibility of citizen services. Identifying the itineraries on which to intervene was the first step of an experiment consistent with the FVG Guidelines. The Guidelines provide for a detailed territorial analysis and a careful identification of the accessibility needs of citizens. The dialogue with stakeholders is very important to identify the needs; through a continuous dialogue, furthermore, it is possible to have a more precise understanding of the spatial identification and the survey of the performances; knowing the performances means being able to create a hierarchy of intervention priorities for coherent planning of the interventions.

The research, from such assumptions, was articulated starting from the analysis of the municipal territory on a regional and municipal database, as well as of territorial importance to proceed with a selection of good practices according to elements of the process, planning, and management of interventions to eliminate architectural barriers and their design (Figure 1.).

The next steps looked at the consideration and identification of places with high priority of interest in terms of the need for accessibility of spaces with greater attractiveness and concentration of users. The next phase involved an analysis aimed at identifying the criticalities contextualized in the framework of the paths with the priority of interest for accessibility planning and was proposed as an opportunity to integrate the detection methodology considering the spatial components and elements of the urban and building system. The invitation to look at the public space as an element that encompasses a broad reality with which users are confronted every day and how each element that composes it manages to interact with one another, creating synergies to ensure continuity, it involved reflections and prescriptions in support of a design based on non-compliant solutions but guaranteeing that accessibility "goal" addressed to people.

The invitation to look at the public space as an element that encompasses a broad reality with which users are confronted every day and how each element that composes it manages to interact with one another, creating synergies to ensure continuity, it involved reflections and prescriptions in support of a design based on non-compliant solutions; accessibility cannot be achieved by adopting compliant solutions (Figure 2.).

In this sense, the relief of the criticalities was set up to be able to identify and map them in a point-like, areal, linear way and, therefore, return them on different graphic platforms. Therefore, the categorization of the different issues was based on their entity, relying on the classification dictated by the law, to list and highlight the recurring ones. The purpose of the work involved the creation of an organized and uniform container capable of storing georeferenced data that are responsible for serving the entire community, including possible web applications for tourism. The accessibility system is therefore represented in a structured way and can be made available to stakeholders to provide information to interested users.

At the same time, a SWOT survey was conducted on a national scale on the offices in charge of accessibility and environmental well-being and made it possible to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that arise for some administrative offices in charge of accessibility, usability and/or environmental well-being. The work involved research aimed at identifying how many and which were - at the national level - the offices dedicated to Inclusion as services to the person and those committed to environmental accessibility, to arrive at an understanding of the link between the bodies supervised by municipal technical officers in charge or, at most, regional. The research envisaged the first phase of synthesis of the different organizational models of the administrative offices dedicated to accessibility and environmental well-being present on the national territory, specifying the services offered, the number of employees, and a brief description of the skills, and the reference contacts.

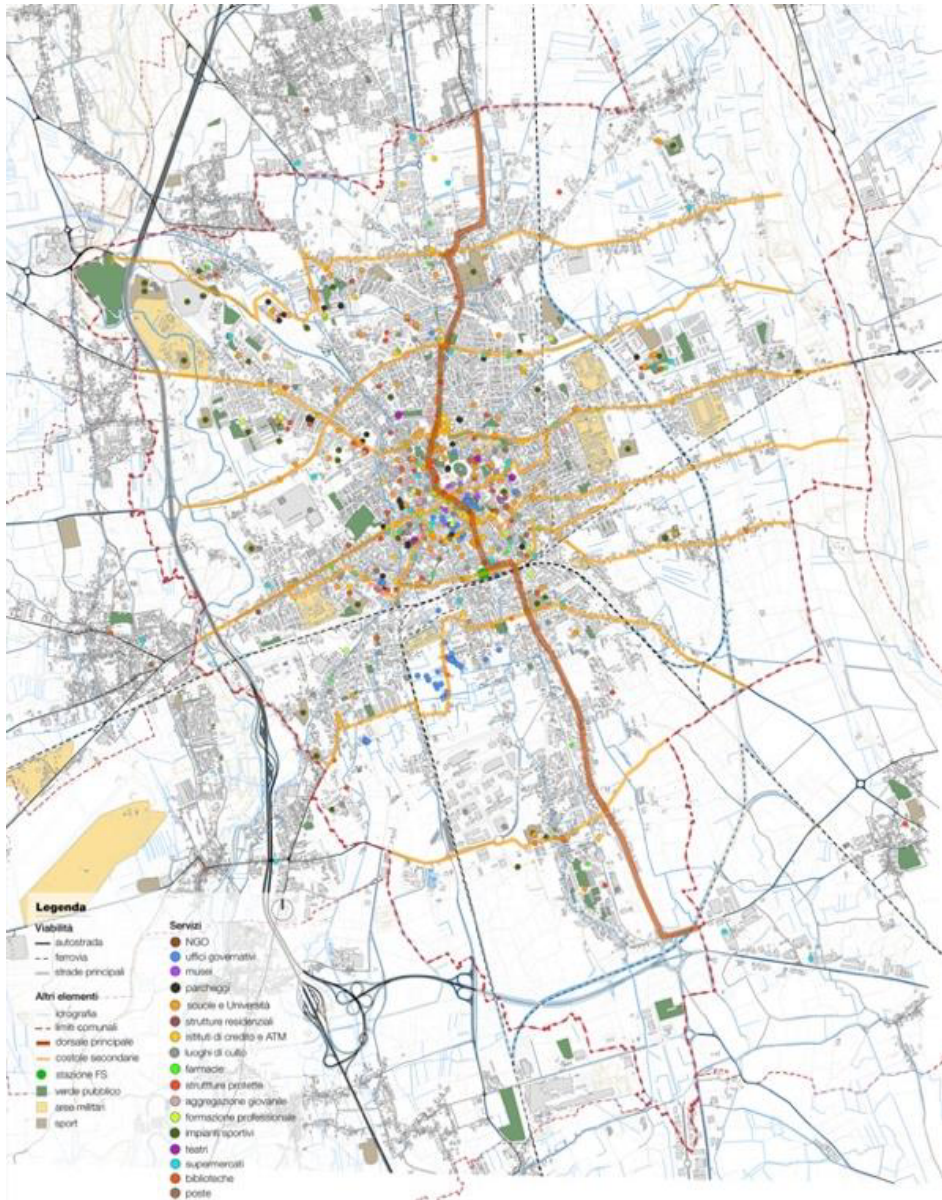
In the second phase, the research aimed to deepen the theme of the establishment of administrative offices dedicated to accessibility and environmental well-being; it also questioned the various possible services, imagining their establishment with the possible drafting of the PEBA. In addition to programming, a PEBA can strengthen relationships with stakeholders concerning the validation of environmental quality results achieved in general, with consequent improvement in the usability of public spaces and buildings.

To answer these questions and deepen the analysis to obtain a matrix that made it possible to compare the strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses of the various offices investigated, we proceeded with cross-interviews with professionals involved in the management of administrative offices dedicated to the removal of architectural barriers, environmental accessibility, and centers for the adaptation of the domestic environment<sup>3</sup>.

The experiences, the will, and the ideas that have given life to paths aimed at interacting with the "hidden actors" of marginalized realities as well as with planners, municipal administrators, research bodies, and universities, have allowed an examination of the most effective and suitable to increase the levels of accessibility and usability of the different territorial contexts to be transmitted in the administration of Udine.

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<sup>3</sup> To complete the survey, some interviews were also carried out aimed at professionals in the sector including Dr. Mariachiara Guazzieri, head of the Elimination of Architectural Barriers (EBA) office in Venice; dr. Leris Fantini, design consultant in the field of environmental well-being, urban accessibility and construction, member of CERPA Italy; dr. Fausto Bertoncelli, former head of the Environmental Wellbeing Office of the Municipality of Ferrara).



**Figure 1.** Extract the geo-referenced survey of services to citizens. Full documentation of the Municipality of Udine preliminary to the drafting of the PEBA prepared by the Dalt Laboratory of the DPIA within the framework of the Municipality University agreement.





**Figure 2.** Extract from the georeferenced analysis of the accessibility of some urban itineraries. Complete documentation of the Municipality of Udine preliminary to the drafting of the PEBA prepared by the Dalt Laboratory of the DPIA UNIUD as part of the Joint University Agreement

2.2. *Results*

The result of the experimentation process carried out in the Udine area involved an analysis which - through software for the retrieval, analysis, and creation of databases - allows the processing, returns, and transfer of data in the form of maps. georeferenced issues, detailed design, and survey sheets necessary to understand the current situation, recognize recurring criticalities, and imagine possible service actions which, alongside

dedicated planning, combine with conscious planning of the value of people. At the same time, it made it possible to return information and data instrumental to the implementation of the PEBA of Udine in response to the current guidelines of the FVG region. Based on the results of the research, the fundamental guidelines as well as the areas covered by the PEBA, currently being drafted, have been identified<sup>4</sup>.

The research as a whole - aimed at giving answers that look at planning the accessibility of pedestrian paths, connections, and crossings according to a reading of the context in which these elements are inserted - aims to stimulate a new sensitivity in dealing with the planning of elimination of architectural barriers. It is in this sense that the added value of studies is conferred by the peculiarities that promote mobility, safety, and social integration, through implementation, planned, and monitored interventions. The path aims to encourage the design of interventions by optimizing their implementation and providing accessibility in close connection with mobility, safety, and integration.

From the close connection between environmental and technological components, and overall organicity emerges that gives the approach experience from the point of view of design resolutions; this knowledge distances the compliant solution to immerse oneself in the specific reference context of the critical issues analyzed. The research, therefore, aims at orienting towards a less sectoral approach, i.e., based on the attention and sharing of problems by designers, stakeholders, and governance, integrating and identifying the due priorities for intervention, planning, and maintenance of the public spaces. The purpose of this strategic planning is precisely to raise the degree of accessibility of the intervention area, tracing hypotheses of solutions capable of both complying with the technical-regulatory requirements of the relevant legislation and fulfilling the tasks of Universal Design. In this sense, the research provides a simplification of actions for a more immediate and broader view of the issues relating to environmental accessibility [7].

At the same time, the SWOT analysis allows for a synthesis of different organizational models present in the national territory, an analysis, and an in-depth proposal on the issue of setting up offices dedicated to accessibility and environmental well-being. The interdisciplinary significance of 'accessibility and environmental well-being' issues leads to attention being paid to the fact that it is not always possible to delegate matters to a single office, but the involvement of different administrative sections becomes relevant<sup>5</sup>.

According to what was investigated, the offices dedicated to accessibility tend to become an out-of-current cultural cell concerning the entire mechanism of the administrative machine. Starting to work concretely within the bureaucracy and governance, providing for the spread of opinions and changing opinions, and generating a culture of sharing, means giving life to a process of change that puts human rights,

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<sup>4</sup> The municipal administration has just assigned the design task to the Global Project Architettura Inclusiva studio. <https://www.architectureinclusiva.it/>.

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the involvement of different operational sections at the administrative level, the strong relationship between the EBA office and the Mestre Road network office becomes emblematic, of the interaction that ensures the accessibility of crossings and paths dedicated to pedestrians. The synergy between the two offices is since over the years a relationship of trust has been established which, on the contrary, is still lacking with other services in support of the municipal administration.

For years, Ferrara has also attracted attention to the issue of accessibility by the media and national associations of people with disabilities, offering a constant positive image of the innovative work carried out by the UBA office.

urban regeneration, and social inclusion; this is possible by directing the administration to a careful evaluation of services for inclusion - as social action - and environmental accessibility activities through the services of urban infrastructures, buildings, and the environment.

### 3. Conclusive considerations

Never, in a climate of global change, has there been a real cultural turning point that pervades all the social and human sciences, enhancing a vision of the world and of culture in general that allows us to understand how people represent themselves and social and political relations [8]. Approaching society and the facts of everyday life to move away from traditional issues and open, therefore, to experiments that deepen space and reality as a social construct, environmental accessibility becomes a matter capable of understanding the life of the community through the careful rethinking of the morphological fabric of the different urbanized contexts, of its temporality and of all the subjects that take part in it.

By crossing the accessibility rule, the Udine experimentation shifts the focus on expanding the degree of usability of a place and service by focusing on promoting an additive and adaptive process that does not look at the mere removal of barriers but also at raising awareness for fair, healthy and safe use of the collective assets.

On the other hand, starting to work concretely within the administration apparatuses, and providing for the dissemination of results in continuous sharing with operators and users, contributes to giving life to that path of change necessary to guarantee the rights of people through strategic urban regeneration processes dedicated to social inclusion.

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