

**UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO - BICOCCA**

Faculty of Sociology

Master's degree course

Tourism, Territory and local Development



**BARRIER-FREE TOURISM IN LOMBARDY REGION:  
ACCESSIBLE TOURISM AND THE SUPPLY OF  
ACCOMMODATION**

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## ***ABSTRACT***

People with disabilities, particularly people with reduced mobility, are considered tourists with special needs since they deal with accessibility and usability issues in the planning of their tourism experiences.

Accessible tourism promotes the participation in tourism of people with disabilities through the elimination or minimisation of architectural barriers and the creation of products and services that can be usable by people with special needs.

Starting from the needs of people with motor disabilities and the Italian and international accessibility legislation, the project analyses the features of accessible tourism in the provincial capitals of the Lombardy Region. A qualitative survey has been undertaken, making use of the *mystery* observation. The examination of accessibility in hotel facilities aims to the identification of the level of usability by customers with disabilities, according to the spatial organisation of the hospitality environment and the availability of accessible services.

Although many structures possess sufficient accessible requirements, the outcomes of the survey have highlighted accessibility gaps in the accommodation system, derived from the presence of physical barriers. The research has also identified the difficulty in the implementation of systems and devices for the minimisation of these barriers, also due to the widespread diffusion of historical buildings and the lesser willingness to adopt a universal and inclusive approach for the satisfaction of tourists with special needs.

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