



KNOWLEDGE THAT INNOVATES



Matera 2019 Passport. Analysis of purchasing and usage behaviours, profiling of users

Executive Summary

July 2020

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Although not initially included in the bid book, the Passport has become one of the symbols of Matera 2019. Created to give a concrete form to the message of openness towards the world and the future, the "Matera 2019 Passport" has allowed holders to become temporary citizens and to immerse themselves in Matera's cultural offer through access to all European Capital of Culture events, at a symbolic price of 19 Euros, although a wide range of price reductions were available.

The study on the Passport was aimed at observing the behaviour of users - in both the purchase and the usage phases - and at collecting useful data for a more in depth knowledge of the public, to be read at a synoptic level together with the evidence emerging from the field surveys promoted by the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation (FMB2019).

The most interesting fact, which confirms a widespread feeling among those who have contributed in various ways to the realisation of the Matera 2019 programme, is that a very high level of engagement with the public has been achieved compared to the ECoC initiative, as evidenced by:

- a peak in the sales trend recorded as early as January 2019 (the second highest of all trends), shortly after the launch of the Passport and the Matera 2019 programme.
- the tendency to purchase the passport well in advance of the first occasion for use, which for the Italians is an average of 80 days.
- the high level of participation by permanent citizens of Matera and Basilicata: the passports associated with residents make up 28% of the total (equal to 34% of the total turnover from ticket sales), with young people under 30 making up the highest percentage of the buyers; 54% of the passports had already been purchased between November 2018 and January 2019.

The purchasing behaviour of temporary citizens, on the other hand, is traceable from the purchase data of the FULL and FULL DAILY passports. Although not immersed in the build-up to Matera 2019, tourists and visitors also expressed their intention to participate in the events on the calendar as early as the first few months from the launch of the initiative: 12.3% of the passports were, in fact, purchased within the first quarter of 2019, when only the FULL version was still available for tourists (open subscription with unlimited access for the entire duration of Matera 2019). In order to increase the levels of participation, the DAILY formula (valid from the first use until midnight of the same day) was launched, which, starting from April 2019, sustained a long high season which ended only in October 2019, when the flows decreased and then rose again in December to coincide with the two weeks of programming of the Open Culture Festival at the end of the ECoC experience. Although launched months later than the other types of passports, the DAILY constitutes 30% of the total purchased in the year and has an average month-on-month incidence of 40%, with peaks in the launch month of April 2019 (46%), in August 2019 (65%) and in January 2020 (66%).

Passport holders accounted for a total of 142,358 entries to a total of around 200 events, between contingent events (i.e. events for which both the reservation and possession of the passport were required) and non-contingent events (i.e. events for which booking was not

required and mere possession of the Passport was enough). The absolute figure translates into a participation rate of around 2.7 events for each Passport holder and 4.3 events for each buyer, in line with the results of the opinion poll carried out by Datacontact S.r.l. on the usage behaviours of permanent and temporary citizens of Matera 2019: around 70% of those interviewed by Datacontact operators said, in fact, that thanks to the Passport they were motivated to participate in a greater number of events than they would have done without a Passport. The figure is all the more positive if we consider that it does not take into account the participation of Passport holders in the free admission events which made up approximately 65% of the Matera 2019 programme.

A further element of consistency of the data processed through the study with respect to the field surveys conducted separately by FMB2019 is highlighted with respect to the Passport's inclusion capacity: the passport was in fact able, probably also thanks to the very attractive pricing, to involve an audience that is traditionally less inclined to attend cultural events. If, from the clustering carried out by UNIBAS scholars in the context of the economic evaluation of Matera 2019, it emerges the possibility of distinguishing among users a numerically consistent group characterised by a level of education and cultural use lower than the sample average, but by a satisfaction rate that is very high, the profiling of Passport users confirms the participation of an audience - representing more than 40% of the total - with levels of education below university degree. The two versions therefore seem to indicate the achievement by FMB2019 of one of the main objectives of the bid book, confirming the perception highlighted by 83.5% of the interviewees of Datacontact S.r.l. as part of the opinion poll, according to which a sector of the public that previously did not attend similar initiatives participated in the events of Matera 2019.

Data distribution relating to participation on the basis of gender shows that the public attending Matera 2019 was predominantly female: women represented 61% of the total users, in correlation with national trends, with a very high incidence of female users in the under 30 categories. Women are a fundamental target market for Matera 2019 not only in quantitative terms, but also as very active users: in fact, women buyers took part in over 9 events, compared to 7.7 for men.

The participatory tools and results developed for local schools are the subject of an extensive discussion within the report *A Matera si produce cultura* [Culture is produced in Matera]. Thanks to the observatory it was possible to verify the effectiveness of direct promotion to this target audience, as shown by the peaks in the purchasing trend coinciding with the launch and relaunch of the Education Programme, respectively in the months of April and September 2019. The strong growth of levels of participation of schools in autumn 2019 can also be related to the intense action aimed at the involvement of this target market developed by FMB2019 through the cycle of exhibitions related to the project *The Poetry of Primes* (3 of the 5 events held between October and early November 2019) and the exhibition *Blind Sensorium - The Anthropocene Paradox*, which opened in September 2019 and ended in January 2020.

Finally, the study made it possible to focus on some of the most critical aspects linked to the Passport sales network and the effectiveness of the co-marketing policies developed.

With respect to the first point, it should be noted that purchases have passed through traditional channels, with a clear preference, on the part of all target markets, for transactions carried out in person at the ticket office (78%) and in particular at the Infopoint in Via Lucana (52% of tickets purchased) and the ticket office at Palazzo Lanfranchi (21% of

tickets purchased). The percentage of online ticket sales was very low (6%), while the Call Centre specifically for schools managed to successfully complete around 23% of the transactions they carried out overall.

On the implementation front of the co-marketing strategy, the study highlighted a low level of penetration of the agreements with sponsors, who have created 3% of purchases. This result was affected by the tight deadlines of part of the Matera 2019 commercial planning and, consequently, an information and communication campaign that was not entirely adequate to promote the potential benefits generated by the partnerships.

However, a completely different assessment concerns the agreement signed in April 2019 between FMB2019 and the company Miccolis S.p.a. for the free use of urban public transport by Passport holders: the analysis of the sales trend shows, in fact, how extending the validity of the Passport to the use of transport services has boosted sales, especially among permanent citizens, therefore making it possible not only to implement an effective commercial strategy, but also to make Matera 2019 an example in Italy and in Europe in terms of environmental sustainability.