

Interreg SlowMove Project 2019 - 2022 – summary

From the 12th century, the waterways between the southern Alps and Milan developed as the most attractive method of commercial connection: along Lake Maggiore, the sublacual Ticino River, and the Navigli (navigation canals) to the Darsena di Milano (docks, the old port), which was its main commercial port. Even in 1953, the Darsena was ranked thirteenth among Italy's national ports in terms of freight reception.



1 – Locarno, Major Lake, Switzerland with their lake and sail boats, as it was at the end the 19th Century.

On the water came to Milan from the 14th century the white/pink marble with which the famous Duomo of Milano was built, from the Candoglia quarry in the town of Mergozzo in Piedmont, located about 130 km north of the city.



2 - On Lake Maggiore in these times, in the direction of Stresa and the Miorina lock

Today, as has been the case for decades, diehard enthusiasts not only in Piedmont, Lombardy and Ticino but also in Emilia-Romagna and Veneto are striving to restore a full navigation line between Lake Maggiore and Milan, removing the last two hydraulic engineering and the regulatory obstacles that still hinder its full enjoyment.



3 - The Miorina lock in Lombardy, Golasecca, Varese Province, existing connection between the Lago Maggiore and sub-lacual Ticino River

The Locarno-Milan-Venice association, based in Locarno, Switzerland on Lake Maggiore, the northern terminus of the line, has collaborated on several international projects aimed at progressively revitalizing not only the ancient waterway that connects the southern Alps, passing over the lower Ticino River at the Piedmont border, and with the Lombard metropolis via its navigation canals.

Even beyond, it wants to reconnect navigation between Milan and Pavia along the existing Pavia canal. This is to reach, by boating, the lower Ticino River and the Po River, and along these, the Adriatic Sea, Venice, and Trieste.

A spectacular waterway link that would then continuously connect the Swiss Alps with the Italian regions of Piedmont, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, the Veneto and the sea.

The latest South Alpine Interreg project Slowmove 2019-2022, placed its focus area between the sub-lake Ticino River and Lake Maggiore, between Piedmont, Lombardy and Canton Ticino in Switzerland.



The Province of Novara - for Italy - and the Locarno-Milano-Venezia Association for Switzerland participated as project leaders, and the East-Ticino Villoresi Draining Consortium, the Ticino and Lake Maggiore Protected Areas Management Authority, the Piedmont and Lombardy Regions and Canton Ticino, the Lombardy Ticino Valley Park and the Municipality of Castelletto Sopra Ticino as partners.

4 - The sub-lacual Ticino River, picture taken from the Piemonte shore in direction of the Lombardy one.

The project included both actions aimed at facilitating the viability of the waterway that from Locarno on Lake Maggiore allows along the Ticino River and the Lombardy canals to reach Milan (online portolano, integration of new dockings and moorings, map of the Locarno Milan Venice route with highlighting of the Canton Ticino, Piedmont and Lombardy sector up to Pavia), and as networking structural interventions already implemented (e.g. the Miorina lock, the Panperduto hydraulic node and locks) and/or planned (e.g., future new Porto della Torre lock).



Also, actions were enacted that promote both land and nautical electromobility (study of a network of electric charging infrastructure, charging stations and use of electric vehicles and proximity vessels) to reduce pollution on and around the waterway and encourage a development of sustainable mobility, including nautical mobility.

5 – The Panperduto hydraulic node and lock, Somma Lombardo, Varese Province, Lombardy

The Locarno-Milan waterway is an historic crossroads of international mobility: close to the main European corridors (Rhine-Alps and Mediterranean), in an area with a strong vocation for tourism and production, very close to Malpensa International Airport (400 m), at the center of a dense and already highly frequented network of bicycle and footpaths.



6 - The new docking on the Villoresi canal at the breathtaking viewpoint of Tornavento in Lonate Pozzolo

These strengths clash with certain unevenness and drop-off points that still limits its accessibility. The SlowMove even slow transport redevelopment and regeneration projects have made it possible to overcome some objective shortcomings and to improve the usability of the existing infrastructures with interventions on docks and moorings, facilities geared to encourage cycling and better knowledge of the services for navigation (portolan chart, geographic navigator) and the surrounding mobility system (Locarno - Milan - Venice Association website, promotional videos, the new printed map and notice geographic information posters on the project at the piers).



7 - Swiss dinghies at refreshment stop, in Boffalora sopra Ticino, Metropolitan Milan, Lombardy

The broader influx generated to the Waterway pays attention to its delicate environment, protected by the MAB Nature Parks Ticino Val Grande Verbano Biosphere Reserve of the territory they cross: this was the aim of the integration projects of waste management services produced by navigation activities at the piers on Lake Maggiore and the study for the creation of a network of electric charging stations to serve mobility along the Waterway.



8 - On the Naviglio Grande (Great canal) in direction of Milan

The Slowmove project is over but other ambitious new projects are being developed together, including in the context of public scheduled navigation and private subsidiary non-scheduled navigation, with the need to revise the obsolete Italian-Swiss convention regulating the use of navigation in the lakes of Lugano and Maggiore, with the need to enhance international and internal water travel and tourism, including cultural tourism, through an improvement in the offer of sustainable nautical transport with extension of the navigable network until to the Milan Navigli (Old Port).

Niccolò Salvioni, Locarno, February 13, 2023.

Associazione Locarno - Milano - Venezia



Progetto Interreg
Co-pilotaggio
2019 – 2022

URL <https://www.locarnomilanovenezia.ch/>

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/associazione-locarno-milano-venezia/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@locarnomilanovenezia>

Casella postale 862
Piazza Grande 18
6601 Locarno - Cantone Ticino – Svizzera
tel +41 (0)91 756 31 11