



19th European Cultural Tourism Conference

**Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Culture Compass for Europe:
Synergies for Regenerative, Smart and Resilient Cultural Tourism**

23 - 26 September 2026

| Skiathos

| Greece



Programme

Preliminary Version 3.3



www.skiathos.gr

www.culturaltourism-network.eu

Day 1 – Wednesday, 23rd September 2026

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre, Open-air theatre

17:30 Registration

18:00 – 20:00 **Opening Ceremony**

Moderator: Simina Manea, ECTN President and Executive Manager, Sibiu County Tourism Association, Romania

- Opening address by the hosts, Mr Thodoris Tzoumas, Mayor of Skiathos and Mr Dimitris Kouretas, Governor of the Region of Thessaly
- Address by European Commissioner for Transport and Tourism, Mr Apostolos Tzitzikostas (video message)
- Address by European Commissioner for Culture, Mr Glenn Micallef (video message) (tbc)
- Address by the University of Thessaly (ECTN Associate Member)
- INSPIRES EU Single Market Programme Project introductory video
- State of the Network address by the ECTN Secretary-General, Manos Vougioukas
- Cultural programme (Concert by Skiathos Municipal Philharmonic Orchestra, Choir)



20:00 –22:00 **Welcome Reception hosted by the Mayor of Skiathos** (by invitation)

And visit to Skiathos Maritime and Culture Tradition Museum at Bourtzi



Day 2 – Thursday, 24th September 2026

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre

08:30-09:00 Registration

09:00- 11:00 **SESSION 1- Trends, case studies, best practices, methods, concepts**

Parallel sessions

A. Main Hall

B. Council Chamber

C. Maritime Museum

Resilient Tourism	Creative Tourism	Active, Slow and Accessible Tourism
Uniting Nature and Cultural Heritage for a Sustainable Future. Case study of the Turaida Museum Reserve Gunta Zaķīte, Head of the Communication and Educational Department of the Turaida Museum Reserve, Latvia FinTech-Driven Shadow Banking and Sustainable Tourism Development: Opportunities and Challenges in Emerging Markets Prof. Vakhtang Charaia, Dean of Business and Management School and Deputy Rector, Grigol Robakidze University, Georgia From Sustainability Strategy to Destination Resilience: Diagnosing Implementation Conditions in Greek Tourism Destinations Suzanne Duffour, sustainability consultant, researcher, and founder of Yun Consultancy, Sweden The Sustainability Gap in Tourism: Social norms, Moral emotions and Luxury self-presentation in Sustainable Holiday Choices Jan Møller Jensen, PhD, Associate Professor of Marketing at the University of Southern Denmark Challenges and Opportunities in Sustainable Tourism Development in Georgia: Early Childhood and Preschool Education Reforms Lela Beruashvili and Maia Meladze, Grigol Robakidze University, Tbilisi, Georgia The Mythological Heritage of Mount Pelion : where modern trails meet the footprints of centaurs Chariklia Mamali, Greece	Performing Landscape Enjoyment: Creative Tourism Case Studies by Museu Experimenta Paisagem Marta Aguiar, architect and founder of Museu Experimenta Paisagem and MAG – Marques de Aguiar, Portugal Creative tourism, festival experience and ethical marketing communication: the case of Bansko Jazz Festival Stefania Temelkova Ph.D., lecturer and researcher at the Department of Economics at New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria Creative Tourism and Sustainable Development in mountainous Greece: the Vovoussa Festival, the Nowstalgism Project, the Lake Stefaniada Festival Maria Argyro Pelagidou, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece Co-Creating for cultural heritage preventive conservation Andrea Bringas Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania University Savoie Mont-Blanc, IREGE, Annecy, France Creative Ljubljana: Connecting visitors with a city's living creative ecosystem through co-created experiences Neža Šemič, Ljubljana Tourism, Slovenia Symphony of Pezinok Wines Martin Hrubala and Matus Lajcak, Malokarpatské múzeum v Pezinku, Pezinok, Slovakia	Time for a bike: A Cross-Regional Model for Extending Stays and Reducing Seasonality Erika Kovačič Marinič and Tina Novak Samec, Institute for Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, Slovenia AdventureWeek Peloponnese: Building a Regenerative Cultural and Adventure Tourism Ecosystem through Trails, Heritage and Local Communities Region of Peloponnese, Greece Promoting heritage with the help of slow tourism - how the existing non-invasive infrastructure can be a hook for slow travellers. A cycling perspective Ionut Maftei, Bike in time, Bucharest, Romania, Velo Popas, Bucharest, Romania, Romanian Ecotourism Association, Braşov, Romania Incoming Romania Association, Bucharest, Romania Cycle Summit, Konstanz, Germany Danube Competence Center, Belgrade, Serbia Mass Running Events as Cultural Tourism Assets Nick Bogiazides, University of Thessaly, Tourism Planning, Research and Policy Unit, Volos, Greece Evi Zacharia, Marathon Runners, Volos Health Runners Club, Greece Kostas Palantzas, Volos Health Runners Club, Greece Dimitra Giatagana, Niki Volou Sports Club, Greece

Restoration and integration of the Sequillo River ecosystem as it passes through the Historic Site of Medina de Rioseco David Estaban Rodríguez, Ayuntamiento de Medina de Rioseco, Spain	Co-creation of Sustainable Experiences at Creative Tourism Events in Georgia Nana Kartvelishvili, Head of the Tourism Product Development Department, Georgian National Tourism Administration Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia	Accessible Cultural Heritage for All Visitors Katerina Papamichail, Architect and Expert on Accessibility, Universal Design and Accessible Tourism, founding and Board Member of ENAT, the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT), Belgium
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11:00 – 11:15 *Coffee break*

11:15-13:00 SESSION 2 - Trends, case studies, best practices, methods, concepts

Digitalisation – Smart Tourism	Transnational Thematic Tourism – Cultural Routes	Regenerative Tourism
Village Travel Bot – a Digital Tool for the Tourism Valorisation of Rural Heritage in the Republic of Moldova Tatiana Arcan and Mihail Zanevici InnoVillage NGO, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova	Bridging Cultures as a Cultural Tourism Product Julita Zaprucka, Director, Muzeum Karkonoskie, Jelenia Góra, Poland	Tourism development of olive-growing heritage: the regenerative cultivation of the land Fotini Tirpintiri, President of Lesvos island Olive Oil Association, Greece
From Physical to Virtual: Revolutionizing Cultural Heritage Preservation and Museum Experiences in the Metaverse. A Case Study of the Archaeological Museum of Sparta Angeliki Mouti, University of the Peloponnese, Greece	From Communities to Network: The Journey toward DIA Bálint Kádár, Budapest University of Technology and Economics Cristina Lixandriou, National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, Romania	From Blossom to Table: Regenerative Cherry-Based Cultural Tourism in Brda Tina Novak Samec and Erika Kovačič Marinič, Institute for Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport Brda, Dobrovo, Slovenia
Destinations Telling Their Own Story: An Interactive Cultural Guide Beyond Generic AI Alexander Förster, Independent practitioner, Berlin, Germany	The European Ceramics Route: Preserving Cultural Identity and Traditional Craftsmanship Elena Balatel and Adriana Musteata, National Tourism Office of Moldova, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova	Hands Across Generations: From Heritage to Regeneration – Co-Creating Cultural Tourism Futures Through Traditional Crafts and Intergenerational Exchange Sotiris Christoforou, Nicosia Tourism Board, Cyprus
Digital Innovation for Sustainable Tourism: The Impact of the Eko App Moldova Initiative Elena Balatel, National Tourism Office, Republic of Moldova	Non-mainstream Tourist Behaviours: Understanding How Niche Spaces Attract East Asian Visitors Beyond Florence's 'Tourist Triangle' Tsu An Lee. University of Florence, Italy	Holding the Paradox: Collective Intelligence as the Missing Layer in Destination Regeneration Živa Kovačević, Space for Dreaming, Ljubljana, Slovenia
From Strategy to Delivery: A SMART-TOUR Framework for Digital, Inclusive and Regenerative Cultural Tourism Polykarpos Karkavitsas, Managing & Coordination Unit of Smart Tour Interreg Europe project, Greece	From Ideological Control to Memory Tourism: Professionalizing Secret-Police Heritage and Transnational Marketing Networks Brunilda Licaj, University A. Moisiu, Durres, Albania	Museums as Catalysts of Regenerative Cultural Tourism: The Case of Georgia Vakhtang Charaia, Maka Piranashvili, Mariam Lashkhi, Lizi Dzimistarishvili, Grigol Robakidze University, Georgia
Vine & Wine Smart Information Center for visitors Nicolas Miliarakis, Heraklion Development Agency, Greece Smart Tour lead partner	Conditional Consent: Community Participation and Public-Private Collaboration for Regenerative, Heritage-led Cultural Tourism at Peripheral Sites in Greece and Italy Antonio Amleto Melillo, American University of Rome, Italy	Danube Crafts Route: A Heritage-Led Regenerative Tourism Model for Sustainable Cultural and Community-Based Destination Regeneration in the Danube Region Cristina Lixandriou, National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, Bucharest, Romania
Legacy of Pafos 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism Nasos Hadjigeorgiou, Executive Director, Pafos Regional Board of Tourism, Cyprus Smart Tour partner		

13:00 – 14:00 *Light Lunch*

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre Main Hall

Cultural Tourism Developments

Moderator: Anne Grady, ECTN Honorary Member, Ireland

- Culture Compass for Europe and Joint Declaration, including Sustainable Cultural Tourism
- European Heritage Days 2026
- The Contribution of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes to the Sustainable Development of Local Communities and Cultural Tourism, Greek Ministry of Culture
- European Parliament Resolution: "Enhancing connectivity, preserving cultural heritage, and driving local excellence in European tourism: destination management and regional tourism growth"
- European Heritage Hub and Sustainable Cultural Tourism, Europa Nostra
- Videos of Interreg Europe projects: EnoGastroDEST on Wine and Gastronomy Tourism; RESPECTS on Religious, Spiritual and Pilgrimage Tourism; Smart Tour on Smart Tourism – Smart Destinations
- Address by the World Tourism Association for Culture and Heritage
- Charter for Sustainable Cultural Tourism – Revised version launch, ECTN Secretary-General
- Honorary member acceptance address by Ms Iulia Niculica, former Head of Administration at the European Travel Commission (ETC), Brussels

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee break

Presentation by Finalists of ECTN Awards 2026

Moderator: Piet Jaspaert, Jury Chair, ECTN Honorary Member, former Europa Nostra Vice-President

Pitches by the 19 Awards finalists, by category:

1. Resilience in Sustainable Cultural Tourism Destinations
2. Creative Tourism and co-created visitor experiences
3. Digitalisation in Smart Tourism Cultural Heritage aspects
4. Transnational Thematic Tourism products involving Culture and Heritage
5. Active, Slow and Accessible Cultural Tourism
6. Regenerative Tourism and Destination Regeneration

17:30 End of Day 2 Sessions

20:30 - 23:00 Conference Gala Dinner

By invitation, including:

Awards ceremony for 'Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism 2026'

ECTN in partnership with **Europa Nostra**, **European Travel Commission** and **NECSTour**, supported by: **INSPIRES SMP-COSME** and **Smart Tour Interreg Europe** projects, **Creative Tourism Network**, **European Network for Accessible Tourism**, **European Cyclists Federation / Active Tourism Coalition**, and **Europeana Foundation**.



Day 3 – Friday, 25th September 2026 – Plenary Sessions

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre, Main Hall



09:00 - 11:00 SESSION 5: Resilient Tourism Initiatives and Developments

Moderator: Manos Vougioukas, Communications Manager, INSPIRES SMP Project, ECTN

- **Keynote address: Developments and achievements of the Single Market Programme for Tourism SMEs and DMOs by EISMEA**, Mr Alan Vella
- **INSPIRES: Digitalisation, Sustainability and Resilience in European Tourism – What Works?** Claudia Harms, City of Bremerhaven, and Franziska Stenzel, Experience Bremerhaven, Germany, together with INSPIRES partners from Belgium and Spain
- **DETOUR: Development of Resilient Tourism Ecosystem Along Mediterranean Walking Routes**, Luca Bruschi, European Association on Via Francigena, Fidenza, Italy
- **PHOENIX 4.0: Resilient Ecosystem for Empowering Tourism SMEs**, Lucija Barišić, ARCTUR, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- **TASTE**: Cristina Martín, Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Spain (tbc)
- **Policy implications and Discussion**

11:00-11:15 *Coffee Break*

11:15 SESSION 6: Initiatives, Synergies and Prospects for Smart, Resilient, Sustainable and Regenerative Cultural Tourism

Moderator: Anne Grady, ECTN honorary member

- **UN Tourism** (formerly UNWTO), Current trends and challenges in Tourism (tbc)
- **UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Programme** (tbc)

Views and initiatives of pan-European bodies:

- **Destination Europe: Promoting Responsible Travel Behaviours**, Matteo Nardin, Marketing Project Manager, **European Travel Commission (ETC)**, Brussels
- **Creative Tourism as a Catalyst for Sustainable and Regenerative Destination Development**, Caroline Couret, Creative Tourism Network, Barcelona, Spain
- **Europeana and the Tourism Sector** Dr Adrian Murphy, Europeana Collections Manager
- **Accessible Tourism Strategies for Sustainable Cultural Tourism Destinations**, Ivor Ambrose, European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)
- **Active Tourism Coalition**, Agathe Daudibon, EuroVelo and ECF Cycling Tourism director, Active Tourism Coalition Coordinator
- **Europa Nostra** Jimmy Jamar, Executive Vice-President

Announcement of ECTN Conference and Awards venue in 2027

Concluding remarks, Simina Manea, ECTN President, Romania

13:30 *End of Day 3 Sessions – Light Lunch*

14:30 – 15:30 ECTN General Assembly (ECTN members only)

16:00-19:00 Study visits to Evaggelistria Monastery Museum and Skiathos Castle, organised and hosted by the Municipality of Skiathos



Day 4 – Saturday 26th September 2026 – Study Visits

10:00 – 12:00 Study visits to Museums at Skiathos town

