

Thessalia Charter

for

Sustainable Cultural Tourism

Second Edition

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Purpose of the Charter

The purpose of this **Charter** is to bring together in a single, comprehensive and integrated document the main principles, features, findings, conclusions and recommendations on best practices and priorities regarding **Culture & Heritage Tourism**.

This **Charter** aims to build on all relevant previous initiatives, declarations, convention, resolutions, opinions and charters, to exploit synergies and facilitate implementation of recommendations by national, regional and local destinations authorities and agencies.

The overall aim is to encourage **sustainable and responsible tourism** policies and actions across Europe and beyond, through **engaging culture and heritage with innovation and cohesion**.



Procedure

- First presented and discussed at the CHARTS INTERREG IVC Project Closing Conference on 12th September 2014, held in Agria, Volos, Magnesia, **Thessalia** Region, Greece, (hence known as the '**Thessalia Charter**')
- Launched in **Brussels** for EU Institutions, Pan-European and international stakeholders on the 9th October 2014, an event within the '**Open Days - 12th European Week of Regions and Cities**'
- Launched in **London** during the '**World Travel Market**' tourism exhibition on 5th November 2014, as part of the '**World Responsible Tourism Day**' activities supported by **UNWTO**
- A consultation period followed until mid-December 2014, with the final version of the Charter (first edition) published at end December 2014, aiming to mark a **new era in cultural and heritage sustainable tourism development and promotion in the EU and beyond**



Second Edition – November 2016

- Need to include developments over the past 2 years.
- Need to further the scope with additional priority themes, according to ECTN member requirements and proposals
- Further consultation with stakeholders, European Union institutions, UNWTO / UNESCO, European Travel Commission, Tourism Manifesto signatories, Europa Nostra / European Heritage Alliance, local and regional authorities, tourism boards and associations, research institutes and NGOs
- Link Charter to UN #IY2017 and EYCH 2018, as ECTN's contribution regarding Sustainable Cultural Tourism aspects

Principles

- From previous declarations, including from ECTN & CHIRON projects, ICOMOS, UNESCO, UNWTO, Europa Nostra, FEDECRAIL, etc
- From EC Communications
- Responses and Resolutions of the **European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic & Social Committee**
- **European Tourism Forum**
- **Culture Forum**
- **European Heritage Alliance 3.3**

Important Additions to 2nd Edition

- **'Siem Reap Declaration on Tourism and Culture – Building a New Partnership Model' (UNWTO and UNESCO)**
- **'Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe' (Europa Nostra)**
- **'European Tourism Manifesto for Growth & Jobs' (ETC)**
- **UN International Year of Sustainable Tourism 2017**
- **European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018**
- **Committee of the Regions Opinion NAT-VI/009 on 'Tourism as a driving force for regional cooperation across the EU'**

Good Practices from CHARTS project

1. Climate Change Impacts
2. Accessibility to Heritage
3. Effective Partnerships
4. Host Communities & Responsible Tourism
5. Quality Criteria
6. Visitor Information
7. Place Marketing
8. Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe
9. Railway Heritage
10. Local Products & Gastronomy
11. Traditional Skills & Trades
12. Cycling for Tourism



European Union

European Regional Development Fund



INTERREG IVC

INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS



ECTN
EUROPEAN
CULTURAL
TOURISM
NETWORK

Additional Priority Themes

1. Intangible Heritage for Sustainable & Responsible Tourism
2. Industrial Heritage Tourism
3. Heritage Interpretation Facilities
4. Digitalization & Innovation in Cultural & Sustainable Tourism
5. Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel, within Destinations and for Access to/Connectivity of Destinations
6. Cultural & Creative Industries Synergies with Tourism
7. Mobilizing Volunteers in Cultural & Heritage Tourism
8. Religious & Pilgrimage Tourism
9. Experience Economy Synergies with Cultural Tourism



Additional Priority Themes 2nd Edition

- 10. Maritime, Coastal & Aquatic Heritage for Tourism**
- 11. Creative Tourism**
- 12. Education & Training for Cultural & Heritage Tourism**
- 13. Age – friendly Tourism, Silver Tourism**
- 14. Youth Incentives for Cultural Tourism through Heritage appreciation**
- 15. Wine Tourism**
- 16. Conservation and its contribution to Cultural Tourism**
- 17. Sharing Economy impacts on Cultural Tourism**
- 18. Enhanced Governance for Cultural Tourism, including Funding aspects**

Proposed Actions

- To strengthen the procedures and instruments for cultural tourism development and promotion, through effective **destination management**
- To involve all key stakeholders in close cooperation between cultural and tourism sectors, including public, private and voluntary sectors, as **effective partnerships**
- To strengthen the information means, channels and materials for the promotion, education, study and awareness-raising of visitors before, during and after their visits, including creation of multilingual materials
- To create **place marketing** frameworks, strategies, plans and channels for cultural tourism in all forms
- To strengthen the **sustainability and competitiveness** of European tourism through **cultural routes** and **cultural landscapes**
- To encourage and facilitate **networking of cultural tourism destinations** including policy makers, practitioners and researchers

Enlarged Network

- Establish an overall, informal and enlarged umbrella **‘Network of European Cultural and heritage Tourism Authorities and Research institutes’ (NECTAR)**, including the **European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN)**, the **CHIRON** network and legacy, and other relevant networks and bodies active in this and closely related fields, as a platform based on the **‘Thessalia Charter’ principles and practices**
- Establish a **Cultural Tourism Observatory**
- Proposal for **NECTAR in Creative Europe Networks** (submitted by ECTN on 25th November 2016)



Proposals for EU co-funded projects

- **Interreg Europe 3rd Call** (opens 1 March – 30 June 2017), **Proposed topics:**
 - **Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) contribution to Cultural & Creative Tourism**
 - **Railways Industrial & Cultural Heritage in Developing Sustainable European Tourism**
 - **Maritime and Coastal Heritage Tourism**
- **COSME 2017 Call**
- **Horizon 2020 Reflective Societies Call**
- **Creative Europe Platforms, etc.**