Programme

Version 5.1 final

SKIATHOS

www.skiathos.gr

www.culturaltourism-network.eu

Day 1 – Wednesday, 23rd September 2026

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre, Open-air theatre

18:00 Registration

18:30 – 20:00 **Opening Ceremony**

- Opening address by the host, Mr Thodoris Tzoumas, Mayor of Skiathos
- Address by a representative of the Region of Thessaly (tbc)
- Address by the European Commission – European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency officer, Mr Alan Vella
- Address by the University of Thessaly (ECTN Associate Member), Dr Eva Psatha, Department of Planning and Regional Development, Research Unit of Tourism Policy and Planning (ToPP)
- State of the Network address by the ECTN Secretary-General, Manos Vougioukas and Coordinator of the Argonautica Cultural Route Network (ECTN Member)
- INSPIRES EU Single Market Programme Project introductory video
- Address by European Commissioner for Transport and Tourism, Mr Apostolos Tzitzikostas (video message)

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. Council Chamber	B. Events Hall	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	**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	**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
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	**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	**AdventureWeek Peloponnese: Building a Regenerative Cultural and Adventure Tourism Ecosystem through Trails, Heritage and Local Communities** Nikos Stakias Special Advisor to the Deputy Governor for Tourism Region of Peloponnese, Greece
From Sustainability Strategy to Destination Resilience: Diagnosing Implementation Conditions in Greek Tourism Destinations Suzanne Duffour, sustainability consultant, researcher, and founder of Yun Consultancy, Sweden	**Creative Tourism and Sustainable Development in mountainous Greece: the Vovousa Festival, the Nowstalgism Project, the Lake Stefaniada Festival** Maria Argyro Pelagidou, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece	**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
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	**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
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		
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	**Experiencing the "Experience": Authenticity vs. Commodification in Creative Tourism** Eva Psatha, Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece	

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
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 Lixandroiu, National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, Romania	**The Mythological Heritage of Mount Pelion : where modern trails meet the footprints of centaurs** Chariklia Mamali, Greece
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
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	**Holding the Paradox: Collective Intelligence as the Missing Layer in Destination Regeneration** Živa Kovačević, Space for Dreaming, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Vine & Wine Smart Information Center for visitors Nicolas Miliarakis, Heraklion Development Agency, Greece Smart Tour lead partner (online)	**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	**Museums as Catalysts of Regenerative Cultural Tourism: The Case of Georgia** Vakhtang Charaia, Maka Piranashvili, Mariam Lashkhi, Lizi Dzimistarishvili, Grigol Robakidze University, Georgia
Legacy of Pafos 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism Nasos Hadjigeorgiou, Executive Director, Pafos Regional Board of Tourism, Cyprus Smart Tour partner	**Argonautica Cultural Route: intangible heritage, mythology, arts, poetry and literature about the first legendary journey** Manos Vougioukas, Argonautica Cultural Route Network Coordinator, Greece (with links to Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy and France).	**Danube Crafts Route: A Heritage-Led Regenerative Tourism Model for Sustainable Cultural and Community-Based Destination Regeneration in the Danube Region** Cristina Lixandroiu, National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, Bucharest, Romania
Reshaping the city through smart use of salt heritage for tourism in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina Amra Jaganjac, Tourism Board of the City of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina Smart Tour partner		**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

13:00 – 14:00 Light Lunch

14:00-15:30 SESSION 3 Plenary Session

Venue: Bourtzi Cultural Centre – Council Chamber

Cultural Tourism Developments

Moderator: Anne Grady, ECTN Honorary Member, Ireland

- **Culture Compass for Europe and Joint Declaration**, including Sustainable Cultural Tourism
- **The Contribution of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes to the Sustainable Development of Local Communities and Cultural Tourism**, Fotis Vlachos, Public Officer, EUSAIR Pillar IV (Sustainable Tourism) member and Patritsia Masouraki, Greek Ministry of Culture, Department of International Relations
- **European Heritage Hub and Sustainable Cultural Tourism**, Vanessa Fraga Prol, Advocacy and Partnerships Manager, Europa Nostra
- **Culture: Identity or Commodity? Rethinking the Value of Cultural Heritage in Tourism**, Dimitris Palaiogiannis, 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
- 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

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee break

15:45 - 17:30 SESSION 4 Plenary Session

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 - 23:30 Conference Gala Dinner, Skiathos Palace Hotel

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, Council Chamber

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

The Tourism Intelligence System of Skiathos and the new Cultural Insights
Nikolaos Golfinopoulos, Head of Tourism, ICF (former UN Tourism officer) (online)

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
- **Cultural Routes as Archaeological Corridors: Advancing Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Europe,** Prof. Hrvoje Potrebica, European Association of Archaeologists, Centre for Prehistoric Research, Zagreb, Croatia
- **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 (tbc)

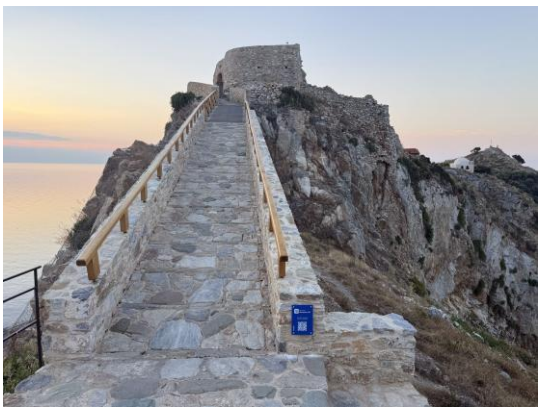
Announcement of ECTN Conference and Awards venue in 2027

Concluding remarks, Simina Manea, ECTN President, Romania

13:30 End of Day 3 Sessions – Light Lunch

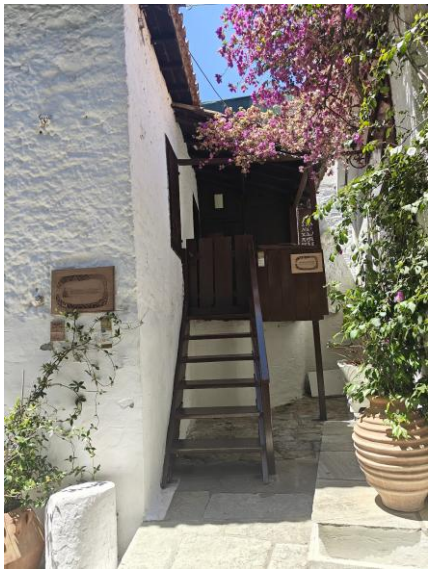
14:30 – 15:30 ECTN General Assembly (ECTN members only)

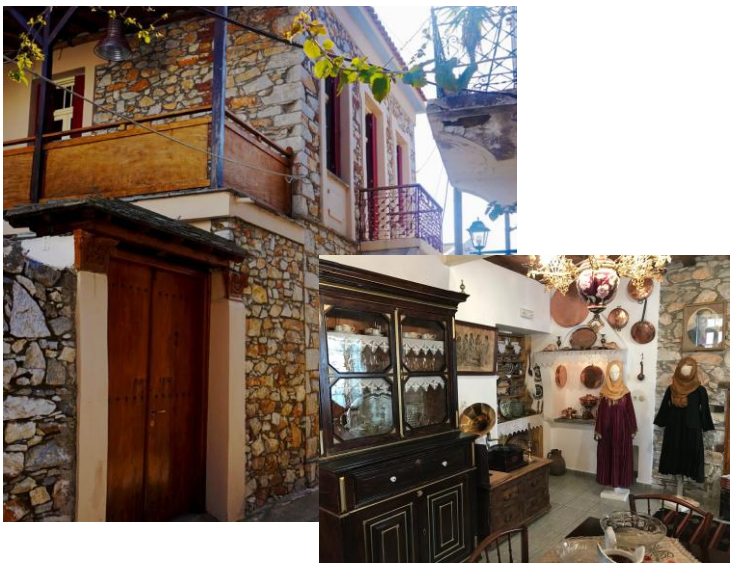
16:30-19:30 Study visits to Skiathos Castle, organised and hosted by the Municipality of Skiathos

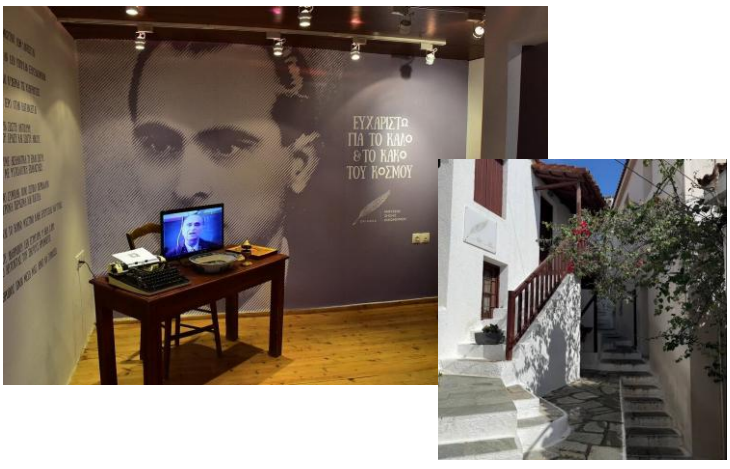


Day 4 – Saturday 26th September 2026 – Study Visits

10:30 – 13:30 Study visits to Evaggelistria Monastery Museum and Museums at Skiathos town







27 September