

Conference on development of harmonized monitoring system dedicated to tourism in the Danube region

October 17th 2018, Sofia

(National Palace of Culture, hall on the 6th floor)

14:00 – 16:45

Agenda:

13:30 – 14:00	Registration (National Palace of Culture, lobby in front of the hall on the 6th floor)
14:00 – 15:00	<p>Panel 1 on Existing Tourism Monitoring Systems – ETIS and INSTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of DG GROWTH on ETIS (TBC) • Representative of UNWTO on INSTO (TBC) • Representative from The Croatian Sustainable Tourism Observatory (CROSTO) (TBC) • Representative from The Aegean Islands Observatory, Greece (TBC)
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee break
15:15 – 16:45	<p>Panel 2 on Establishment of Tourism Monitoring System in the Danube Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Vasil Marinov (TBC) • Representatives from PA 3 SG

Background

On Tourism Observatories

- Tourism is the third largest socio-economic activity in the European Union (EU), and makes an important contribution to the EU's gross national product and to employment. Europe is also the world's number one tourist destination.

- Tourism businesses in the EU are confronted with a number of changes in tourists' profile and behaviour, which increases the importance of reliable statistical data on general trends.
- In this context, there was established a **European Commission's Virtual Tourism Observatory (VTO)** that aims to support policy makers and businesses to develop better strategies for a more competitive European tourism sector. The Observatory is placed under the authority of DG Growth, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
- The Virtual Tourism Observatory provides access to a broad collection of information, data and analysis on current trends in the tourism sector. It includes the latest available figures on the sector's trends and volumes, economic and environmental impact, and the origin and profile of tourists.

Sustainable Tourism Monitoring Systems

- Tourist destinations are increasingly being called upon to tackle social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges. To help them measure their performance in relation to sustainability, which is essential, the European Commission has developed a **“European Tourism Indicators System” (ETIS)**.
- ETIS is a system of indicators suitable for all tourist destinations, encouraging them to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning. It is: a management tool, supporting destinations who want to take a sustainable approach to destination management; a monitoring system, easy to use for collecting data and detailed information and to let destinations monitor their performance from one year to another; an information tool (not a certification scheme), useful for policy makers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders.
- A new **2016 ETIS toolkit** was launched as a tangible contribution from the European Commission towards the UNWTO International Year of Sustainable Tourism Development in 2017. The new toolkit, which employs 43 core indicators and a set of supplementary indicators, was developed as a result of the pilot phases and is available in all official EU languages to enable European destinations to monitor, measure and improve sustainable tourism practices.
- UNWTO has been promoting the use of sustainable tourism indicators since the early 1990s, as essential instruments for policy-making, planning and management processes at destinations. In 2004, the UNWTO published *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook*, the most comprehensive resource on this topic.
- The UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) was created in 2004 with the main objective to support the continuous improvement of sustainability and resilience in the tourism sector through systematic, timely and regular monitoring of tourism performance and impact and to connect dedicated destinations in order to better understand destination-wide resource use and foster the responsible management of tourism.

- INSTO is a network of tourism observatories monitoring the economic, environmental and social impact of tourism at the destination level, committed to regular monitoring of tourism in order to better understand destination-wide resource use and foster the responsible management of tourism. There are 16 observatories currently in operation worldwide.

Participants:

- Local Municipalities from the Danube Region
- PA 3 “Culture and Tourism” Steering Group
- World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)
- European Tourism Association (ETOA)
- Non-governmental organisations
- Representatives of the academics (Universities)
- European Commission, DG Growth, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
- Tour operators, travel agencies and hotel owners (can be invited through branch organizations)

Goals

- Present the added value of the EC's Virtual Tourism Observatory (VTO) for businesses and policy makers across the EU / the Danube Region. Present the wider possibilities of the observatory - a repository for reports, studies and papers where users can search the extensive library by country, theme or year of publication
- Present and exchange experiences about the existing national methodologies for data collection about tourism in the EU
- Discuss future plans for the creation of virtual tourism observatories in the Danube Region
- Raise awareness about the issue of sustainability in managing tourism and present the tools of the EU and the UNWTO. Compare the respective methodologies and approaches of both organisations.
- Present examples of the implementation of the “European Tourism Indicators System” (ETIS) in the Danube Region
- Present examples of the implementation of the UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO)
- Bring together policy makers and businesses from the EU and the Danube Region to discuss the challenges and benefits of the sustainability monitoring systems. Come up with suggestions for improvements.

Expected results

- Improved knowledge about the concept and implementation of virtual tourism observatories in the EU among a wide range of stakeholders
- Discussing and getting feedback on the proposal of establishing a system of virtual tourism observatories in the Danube Region
- Raised awareness about sustainable tourism monitoring systems (ETIS and INSTO) and encouragement of their implementation by both public and private entities
- Presentation of case-studies of ETIS implementation in the EU and in the Danube Region specifically;
- Further steps to be taken by EUSDR countries to develop harmonized monitoring system dedicated to tourism in the Danube region.