



Western Silk Road Working Group



As part of the joint UNWTO-EU “Enhancing the Understanding of European Tourism” project, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is currently implementing the Western Silk Road Tourism Development Initiative, an ambitious tourism project aimed at revitalizing the Silk Road heritage located in the European region, from the Caspian Sea, around the Black Sea and along parts of the Mediterranean basin. Characterised through a rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage, and a common history to share, the Western Silk Road offers destinations with a unique opportunity to diversify and enhance their tourism offer.

The Western Silk Road Tourism Development Initiative is designed to strengthen and diversify the tourism offer of Western Silk Road destinations as well as enhance regional cooperation and cross-border partnerships.

Within the framework of this Initiative UNWTO officially launches the call for participation in the **Western Silk Road Working Group (WG-WSR)**.

Objectives of the WG-WSR

The WG-WSR will function as a collaborative platform and the main contact point in terms of assessing, coordinating and following-up on the recommendations brought forward and received during the Research on the Potential of the Western Silk Road and Roadmap for Development of the Western Silk Road.

The purpose of the Working Group will be:

- ✓ Placing the “Western Silk Road” project on an European level,
- ✓ Creating a territorial brand for the Western Silk Road,
- ✓ Guaranteeing the long-term viability of the Western Silk Road,
- ✓ Encouraging, stimulating and guiding mutual collaborative projects along the Western Silk Road through the interaction, exchange and joint efforts,
- ✓ Connecting the Western Silk Road with the values of sustainable practices, creative arts and crafts,
- ✓ Supporting economic sustainability and development of the project,
- ✓ Establishment of a strategy defining a series of long-term objectives.



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Members

The WG-WSR is open to public and private stakeholders alike. With the mandate of assisting and contributing to the initiatives developed by the UNWTO Silk Road Programme, the Working Group will comprise:

- ✓ UNWTO Silk Road Task Force members,
- ✓ Official country representatives, national, regional and local tourism administrations,
- ✓ Representatives from the European Union, UN Agencies and other international organisations,
- ✓ Stakeholders from the public and private sector, UNWTO Affiliate Members, media partners,
- ✓ Research institutions,
- ✓ Selected specialists on sustainable development, heritage conservation, investment, finance, marketing, etc.

Benefits

The WG-WSR ensures the long-term viability of projects, broad stakeholder engagement and the continuous exchange of knowledge.

The members of the Working Group will exchange available information and updates and develop mutually beneficial projects under the umbrella of the Western Silk Road.

The members will have their destinations and news-feeds disseminated via the official channels of the UNWTO Silk Road Programme and thus will benefit from increased visibility.

Participating Member States and partners will be linked to the relevant international stakeholders and information.

The members of the Working Group will have direct access to:

- ✓ The Western Silk Road research and knowledge,
- ✓ Experiences and know-how of the parties involved,
- ✓ Dynamic framework to create impulses for new tourism development,
- ✓ Regular updates of the project,
- ✓ Events of the Western Silk Road and meetings of the Working Group.

Get involved!

Should you wish to become a member of the Western Silk Road Working Group, please contact silkroad@unwto.org

About the 'Enhancing the Understanding of European Tourism' Project

'Enhancing the Understanding of European Tourism' is a joint project by UNWTO and the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission (DG GROW). The project aims to improve the socio-economic knowledge of the tourism sector: enhance the understanding of European tourism and contribute towards economic growth, job creation, and thus improving the competitiveness of the sector in Europe. The project includes three components: 1) increased cooperation and capacity building in tourism statistics; 2) assessment of tourism market trends; 3) promotion of cultural tourism through the Western Silk Road and; 4) promoting sustainable, responsible, accessible and ethical tourism.

The project is co-financed with the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020) funds and will run until February 2018.



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