

8th UNWTO International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism

Thessaloniki, Greece; 10-12 October 2018

Jointly organized by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Ministry of Tourism of Greece and the Region of Central Macedonia of Greece

Simultaneous interpretation in English, Greek and Russian will be provided

Programme

Tuesday, 9 October

Arrival of participants

21:00

Welcome reception offered by the hosts at the Grand Hotel Palace

Wednesday, 10 October (Venue: Thessaloniki Concert Hall – M2)

Transfers from the Grand Hotel Palace to leave at 09:00 from the hotel lobby.

10:00 - 10:40

Opening Ceremony

- Ms. Elena Kountoura, Minister of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Greece
- Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
- Ms. Voula Patoulidou, Deputy Regional Governor, Region of Central Macedonia, Greece
- Mr. Yiannis Boutaris, Mayor, City of Thessaloniki

10:45 - 12:10

Silk Road Ministerial Roundtable: “The Silk Road within a globalised tourism framework: tourism priorities, regional development plans and the role of the historic routes”.

Moderated by Ms. Sofia Mavrantza, Editor in Chief, CNN Greece.

Tourism Ministers and Heads of National Tourism Administrations from the Silk Road Member States, representatives of International

Organizations and leading representatives from the private sector will share a roundtable focused on assessing the geopolitical potential of the Silk Road, with a special emphasis placed on its role as a transnational tourism route.

Roundtable to conclude with an official photo.

12:15 – 12:25

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNWTO and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

- Mr. Pericles Mitkas, Rector, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

12:25 – 12:45

Themed coffee break with Greek delicacies

12:45 – 13:15

Greece and the Silk Road

- Mr. Alexandros Thanos, Deputy Governor for Tourism and Culture, Region of Central Macedonia
- Dr. Stella Kostopoulou, Associate Professor, Head of the European Interdisciplinary Silk Road Tourism Centre, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- Ms. Themis Panagiotopoulou, Head, Tourism Promotion and Planning Department, Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO)

13:15 - 14:45

Lunch at the Thessaloniki Concert Hall – M1

15:00 – 16:30

Panel Session 1: Tourism Growth through Transnational Cooperation: best-practice examples from the Silk Road and beyond

Moderated by Mr. Patrick Fritz, Technical Coordinator, Technical Cooperation and Silk Road Department, UNWTO

- Mr. Peter DeBrine, Senior Project Officer, Sustainable Tourism, UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Ms. Cristina Ionela Tărteață, Secretary of State, Ministry of Tourism of Romania
- Dr. Ahmed Eiweida, Global Coordinator for Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism, World Bank

- Mr. Robert Travers, UNWTO Expert: “The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road: tourism opportunities and impacts”
- Ms. Katerina Mouzouraki, Communications Manager, Trans Adriatic Pipeline, Greece
- Mr. Kai Markus Xiong, Extreme Athlete and Activist, “Run My Silk Road”
- Mr. Nikolaus Lohmann, CEO, Earth TV

16:30 – 17:00

Coffee Break

17:00 – 18:30

Panel Session 2: Resilience and the Silk Road: tourism intelligence, destination management and the future of travel

Moderated by Mr. Nikolaos Gkolfinopoulos, Silk Road Project Specialist, Technical Cooperation and Silk Road Department, UNWTO

- Dr. Joseph M. Cheer, Lecturer, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia
- Ms. Irimi Sidiropoulou, Sales Manager North Greece & Ionian Islands, Aegean Airlines
- Mr. Andrew Aley, Head, Experience Businesses – Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), TripAdvisor
- Ms. Voula Patoulidou, President, Thessaloniki Tourism Organization
- Ms. Helene Lloyd, Director, TMI Consultancy
- Ms. Maria Founta, Head of Marketing in CEE, Google
- Prof. Dimitrios Buhalis, Head, Department of Tourism and Hospitality, Faculty of Management, Bournemouth University

18:30

End of the first meeting day. Participants to be transferred from the Thessaloniki Concert Hall directly to the Rotònda World Heritage site and then to the thematic dinner.

19:00 – 20:00

Concert at the Rotònda World Heritage Site

20:30 – 22:30

Dinner at the Port of Thessaloniki

22:30 Return to the Grand Hotel Palace

Thursday, 11 October (Venue: Grand Hotel Palace)

08:30 - 10:00 **B2B Networking Breakfast**

Networking session aimed at Silk Road Member States and private sector stakeholders

10:00 - 13:30 **Joint UNWTO and PATA Session: Connecting Asia and Europe through the Silk Road**

Session Overview:

The Silk Road is a series of diverse and exciting destinations linked by history, geography and five thousand years of story-telling. Given the modern consumers' thirst for quirky, authentic and highly personalised experiences, there has never been a better opportunity to encourage travellers to get on the beaten track by unlocking the collective power and diversity of destinations available along the Silk Road. This joint UNWTO and PATA session will examine how by leveraging marketing and technical platforms, destinations can maximise promotion via storytelling techniques that drive tourism in new markets.

10:00 – 10:10 **Introductions:**

- Ms. Daniela Wagner, Director, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)
- Dr. Mario Hardy, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)

10:10 – 10:50 **Keynote Speeches:**

How storytelling impacts travelers' choices and experiences: what data is telling us.

- Mr. Olivier Henry-Biabaud, Chief Executive Officer, TCI Research
- Mr. Mark Bolan, Regional Manager, Europe, Middle East and Africa, TripAdvisor

10:50 – 11:50 **Session 1:**

By using history, folklore and local culture, we will show destinations how they are to position themselves as unique yet also as part of a wider narrative, enabling consumers to package experiences that meet

their needs while adding to an overall sense of being part of something bigger.

Keynote Speech and introduction to the topic: Mr. Julien Causeret, International Sales & Marketing Executive, ECA2.

Panel Speakers:

- Ms. Eleni Sotiriou, Managing Director, Thessaloniki Convention Bureau
- Mr. Essa Saulat, Chief Marketing Officer, Esplorio
- Ms. Emmanuelle Charlotte, International Sales & Marketing Director, ECA2
- Ms. Aspasia Palimeri, Country Manager, Greece, Cyprus and Malta, Mastercard
- Mr. David Goodger, Director, Europe and Middle East, Tourism Economics (an Oxford Economics Company)

11:50 – 12:20

Coffee Break

12:20 – 12:50

Session 2: Overview

TravelBeat will be delivering their insight on storytelling and using an array of marketing techniques on how presenting a modern, connected and safe stay are key to making sure your attractions stand out.

Speakers:

- Mr. Symeon Vasileiadis, Managing Director, TravelBeat
- Mr. John Bridge, Director, TravelBeat

12:50 – 13:20

Travel Yourself Smart

- Mr. Florian Wupperfeld, Managing Director, Leading Culture Destinations

13:20 – 13:30

Wrap-up and close of joint UNWTO and PATA session

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| 13:40 - 14:00 | Closing Ceremony of the 8th UNWTO International Meeting on Silk Road Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Elena Kountoura, Minister of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Greece• Mr. Shanzhong Zhu, Executive Director, UNWTO• Ms. Voula Patoulidou, Deputy Regional Governor, Region of Central Macedonia, Greece |
| 14:00 – 15:30 | Lunch at the Grand Hotel Palace |
| 17:30 – 18:30 | City Visit of Thessaloniki (optional) |
| 21:00 – 23:00 | Thematic Dinner |
| 23:00 | Return to the hotel or Nightlife Programme |

Friday, 12 October

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| 09:00 – 15:00 | Technical Tour to Aigai and the museum of the Royal Tombs. Lunch included as part of the technical tour. |
| 15:30 | Arrival at the Grand Hotel Palace and departure of participants |

Event Partners:



Supported by:

