

# CHRISTA voice

Interreg Europe CHRISTA project newsletter

September 2016, #1

Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Lead Partner, Pafos Regional Board of Tourism in Cyprus, I would like to welcome you to the 1st edition of the Newsletter of our 'flagship' project CHRISTA!

Back in 2012, we started the INTERREG IVC project CHARTS with a group of exceptional partners and stakeholders. Today I am so happy to see that we are successfully capitalising on the success of the previous project.

We, at Pafos Regional Board of Tourism are honoured to lead a such as strong project Partnership with organisations and experts from a broad range of fields in sustainable cultural tourism.

We are certain that the exchange of the 'know-how' and learning from each other will meet the main objective of our project which are to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage assets, and deploy them for the development and promotion of Innovative, Sustainable and Responsible Tourism strategies.

CHRISTA Project has strong synergies with European Capital of Culture Pafos 2017 and we look forward to sharing this unique experience with the project partners. Also, 2017 will be 'International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development', as declared by UN to be organised by UNWTO and 2018 will be 'European Year of Cultural Heritage'. As CHRISTA project partnership we have excellent opportunities to contribute to these highly relevant events for Sustainable Cultural Tourism during the project duration.

I invite you to follow the latest developments of the project, activities, results, achievements and look forward to meeting you all again soon!

With Best Wishes,

Nasos Hadjigeorgiou, Executive Director of Pafos Regional Board of Tourism  
Vice President of European Cultural Tourism Network (2016-2018)



[www.interregeurope.eu/christa](http://www.interregeurope.eu/christa)

1. *Supporting Evidence-based Policy Making*
2. *Measuring Impact*
3. *Monitoring Trends*
4. *Sharing and Disseminating Data*
5. *Maximising Impact*

*5 Strategic Recommendations  
of the project  
'Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe'*

## In this edition:

- ♦ What is CHRISTA project
- ♦ CHRISTA Partnership
- ♦ From CHARTS to CHRISTA
- ♦ Inauguration meeting
- ♦ 1st inter-regional Workshop on Intangible Heritage
- ♦ Contribution to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018
- ♦ Insights in the next edition and contacts

## CHRISTA: Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions 2016 - 2020

EU inter-regional cooperation project to protect & preserve European natural & cultural heritage assets and to deploy them for the innovative, sustainable and responsible tourism strategies



Environment & resource efficiency

### 4 I's

**Priority themes to cultural tourism Development:**

- ◆ Intangible Heritage
- ◆ Industrial Heritage
- ◆ Interpretation Facilities
- ◆ Innovation & Digitisation

**Main beneficiaries:**

**public authorities & their stakeholders**

CHRISTA budget: 1,771,775 EUR

ERDF co-funding: 1,506,008.75 EUR

Project **CHRISTA** is an inter-regional cooperation project for improving natural and cultural heritage policies in the Interreg Europe Programme, which helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy by integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.

CHRISTA aims to **protect** and **preserve natural** and **cultural heritage** assets and **deploy** them for the development and promotion of **innovative, sustainable** and **responsible tourism strategies**, including **intangible** and **industrial heritage**, through **interpretation** and **digitisation**, with **capitalisation** of good practices, **policy learning**, **policy implementation** and **capacity building**.

During 4 years, the project partners will focus on the improvement of regional operational programmes, regional/local strategies & plans in 9 destination regions, advances in relevant policy implementation, as well as upgrading of cultural and natural assets and innovative applications.

The project main outputs will be Action Plans, with implementation monitoring of improved Regional Operational Programmes, regional/local Strategies & Plans in 9 destination regions, communication and dissemination tools for policy learning and capacity building, contribution to EU policies and EU2020 targets.

<u>Expected Results</u>	<u>Main Activities</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building of partner`s key staff, stakeholders and policy makers which will enhance their ability to identify and meet policy instrument improvement challenges.</li> <li>• Better cooperation/partnerships between public &amp; private sectors, tourism &amp; cultural sectors.</li> <li>• Improved 9 policy instruments will ensure sustainable regional development and influence policy makers in other regions.</li> <li>• Added value to the initiatives at EU level with improved policy instruments</li> <li>• Influence other Structural Funds programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 inter-regional thematic workshops, capacity building with study visits 2016 - 2018</li> <li>• 36 Local Stakeholders Group meeting in 9 regions</li> <li>• Staff Exchange programme 2016 - 2018</li> <li>• Development &amp; Implementation of 9 Action Plans for policy instruments</li> <li>• 18 local dissemination events in 9 regions, 2016 - 2018</li> <li>• Final Conference in 2019</li> <li>• Participation at European level events</li> <li>• Incorporate in the activities of the Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development - 2017 &amp; the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018</li> </ul>

*CHRISTA project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the Interreg Europe programme .*

CHRISTA project started in April 2016, involving 10 partners from 10 EU Member States regional, local and regional tourism authorities in 9 EU regions and the pan-European Network based in Brussels.

# CHRISTA

## Partnership



[Pafos Regional Board of Tourism](#) (Lead Partner) is the official regional body representing all sectors of the tourism industry. PRBT is particularly interested in introducing innovative approaches, such as digitization of cultural and natural heritage assets, leading edge interpretation facilities as well as preservation and promotion of the rich intangible heritage of Pafos region.



[European Cultural Tourism Network](#) (Advisory partner) is the only pan-European network for sustainable Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development and Promotion, which brings together the tourism and cultural industry professionals to exchange experience and information on best practice, to influence policymaking and to develop new approaches and innovations.



REGIONE DEL VENETO

[Veneto Region](#) plays a crucial role in the development and support of sustainable and competitive tourism policies, as many other European regions. The Veneto Region— Tourism Department has its own administrative and financial capacity to develop the Actions contained within the ROP ERDF for a sustainable growth of Venetian islands.



[Region of Central Macedonia](#) (RCM) is a regional managing authority, responsible for regional policy making, including Metropolitan Area of Thessaloniki. RCM has a rich and diverse natural and cultural heritage. Cultural heritage and activities related to tourism and promotion is one of the main responsibilities of the region.



[Region Västtra Götaland](#) is responsible for the economic development, tourism, culture, quality assurance and marketing in the region. Tourism is an important tool for regional development. Industrial heritage is one of the prioritised areas to be further developed over the years to come.



[County Council of Granada](#) is a local public administration with a supra-municipal character. It promoting economic and social development & planning of the provincial territory with wide natural & cultural heritage and has long experience in the preservation and use of natural & cultural heritage resources in several areas.



[Vidzeme Tourism Association](#) is a regional tourism organisation bringing together people, governmental institutions & businesses working in tourism sector. Their members local municipalities ensures a power to influence regional/local policies through the planning documents of the municipalities.



[Sibiu County Tourism Association](#) is an initiative of the Sibiu County Council in order to develop and implement tourism policy of Sibiu. The Association is responsible for the elaboration and the implementation of Sibiu county tourism strategy and recognized for its integrated approach of the cultural heritage, involving the public, private and research sector.



[Burgas Municipality](#), located in South-East Bulgaria, is capital of Burgas province, important industrial, commercial, transportation and tourism center. Burgas works on sustainable development, one of which is cultural heritage preservation and promotion, as a tool for sustainable tourism achievement.



[Intermunicipal Community of Ave](#) is a governmental organization that administrates the NUT III level region, representing the 8 municipalities. It has delegated powers from North Regional Coordination & Development Commission with the right to develop policies by itself, including tourism regulations and heritage visit rules.

## from CHARTS INTERREG IVC Project THESSALIA CHARTER

## to CHRISTA Interreg Europe Project and beyond



The [CHARTS Project in the EU INTERREG IVC Programme \(2012-2014\)](#) was concluded two years ago with the **Charter for Sustainable Cultural Tourism**, which became known as the [Thessalia Charter](#) having being launched firstly

at the CHARTS final Conference at Agria, Volos, **Thessalia Region** in Greece, in September 2014. 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 good practices regarding '**Culture & Heritage Added-value to Regional policies for Tourism Sustainability**' (CHARTS).

The Thessalia Charter is a statement of principles on regional policies and strategies which guide the development, planning, management, operations and promotion of cultural and heritage tourism in the European Union and beyond, for the benefit of destinations, communities, businesses, citizens and visitors.

The Charter, apart from highlighting the 12 Good Practices for Sustainable Cultural Tourism identified, documented, exchanged, and transferred within CHARTS Project, proposed additional themes for interregional cooperation, including the following priorities inter-alia:

- ◆ Intangible Heritage for Sustainable & Responsible Tourism
- ◆ Industrial Heritage Tourism
- ◆ Heritage Interpretation Facilities for Cultural Tourism
- ◆ Innovation & Digitalization in Cultural & Sustainable Tourism

The **Interreg Europe** programme, launched in Bologna at the 'Europe, let's cooperate' event in December 2014, provided an excellent opportunity for a follow-up project to CHARTS, based on the above **Thessalia Charter** priorities (so called '**4 I's**').

The CHARTS Management and Coordination Unit (MCU) arranged a 'networking table' which attracted a lot of interest from 23 participants.

Five CHARTS partners had expressed their willingness to continue cooperating in a new project. ECTN, a partner in CHARTS, agreed to be an 'Advisory Partner' and coordinate the proposal for submission to Interreg Europe first call.

The project idea was posted on the Interreg Europe partner search platform which generated overwhelming interest by 125 potential partners.

From both of the above, five new partners have been selected. During the preparation stage in early 2015, the new project name CHRISTA was invented and the prospective partners met in Brussels in June 2015, the day after the Lead Applicant seminar organised by the Joint Secretariat (JS), to finalise the content, partner roles and budget.

The partners worked together to elaborate the project approach on policy learning at different levels, on identification of suitable policy instruments and stakeholder groups, work plan, communication strategy, innovative character and durability of the CHRISTA project. ECTN coordinated the bid preparation during June and July 2015. The application form was submitted online by ECTN on-time by the deadline of 31 July 2015.

The CHRISTA Project was approved by the Interreg Europe Monitoring Committee on 10 February 2016, with conditions.

The conditions were addressed by ECTN in consultation with the partners and final approval of the revised and enhanced project was given by Interreg Europe JS on 12 April, a historic day!

The Charter includes other priority themes which can further be developed in future applications.

Manos Vougioukas  
Secretary - General, European Cultural Tourism Network



Partner search for CHRISTA project idea during the Interreg Europe launch event, Bologna, 03.12.2014

CHRISTA  
Inauguration  
Meeting  
23—24  
May 2016  
Thessaloniki  
Greece



Project CHRISTA Inauguration was started by 1<sup>st</sup> Interregional Steering Committee Meeting which took place in Thessaloniki, Greece on 23 – 24 May 2016, organised by European Cultural Tourism Network.

During the meeting the project partners were presented their regions and cultural assets. Partners also discussed four selected good practices, as well as the roles and tasks of the project and its partners. CHARTS project [12 good practices](#) were shared with the new project partners.

Financial management, technical coordination and the project publicity matters were discussed previously and procedures were agreed upon.

European Cultural Tourism Network, as Advisory Partner will be the project's Communication Manager. It will coordinate the interregional exchange of experience policy learning process by providing technical assistance on the specific topics through external expertise, as well as secure durability of the project results through continuity in policies, responsible tourism actions beyond the project end point. Policy learning and capacities will therefore be available to other destination authorities.

1st  
inter-regional  
workshop on  
the priority  
theme

'Intangible  
Heritage  
Tourism'

22—24  
September  
2016

Guimaraes,  
Portugal



CHRISTA Partners with their stakeholders at the 'Platform for Arts and Creativity' centre, Guimaraes, 22.09.2016

**CHRISTA has capitalized good practices on 'Intangible Heritage Tourism' and exposed it to a wider audience in the conference format with study visits.**

The 1st experience exchange process started with the capitalization of good practices related to one of the top priority topics - 'Intangible Heritage Tourism', between **22 – 24 September 2016 in Guimaraes, Portugal** at the 'Platform for Arts and Creativity' center. Three days meeting was organized by the Intermunicipal Community of Ave (CIM AVE), Portugal.

On the first day, 22nd September, partners started with the highlights of intangible heritage assets in 8 project partner destinations, discussing their best practices in deploying them for cultural tourism development and promotion. The project partners in cooperation with their stakeholders were successful at identifying, analyzing and exchanging the knowledge and practices on the topic. This was done with an innovative character and a focus on understanding how the exchange of experience can directly influence improvement of policies, strategies and future plans yet to be tackled in the project.

External expert, Dr Jordi Tresserras from the University of Barcelona LabPACT/ Ibertur, presented the 'State of the Art' of intangible heritage for sustainable cultural tourism and proposed guidelines to generate policies, strategies and operational plans.

The day was concluded with discussions on 2 key questions: how to deploy Intangible Heritage Assets for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism development and promotion in regions, and how to improve policies, strategies and plans undertaken in the project.

Synthesis and conclusions were drawn with the contribution of the external expert Dr. Tresserras and ECTN Policy Advisor Mr Manos Vougioukas.



Participants of the Conference, at the 'Platform for Arts and Creativity' centre, Guimarães, 23.09.2016

On the second day, 23rd September, the Workshop theme continued, was exposed to a wider audience and also complimented by different keynote speakers, policy makers, experts and external contributors. They all had a common topic that is the essence of CHRISTA project, entitled: **'Intangible Heritage: Incomparable Asset for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Development'**.

One of the Keynote speakers of the day was the Vice-Chair of the Commission for Natural Resources, **Committee of the Regions**, Mr. **Anthony Buchanan**. Mr Buchanan spoke about 'Tourism as a Driving Force'. Followed by the Council member of **Europa Nostra** Prof. **Konraad Van Balen**, who presented 10 key findings & 5 strategic recommendations of the study 'Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe'. Representative of the **European Travel Commission** Ms. **Iulia Niculica** presented 'The European Tourism Manifesto for Growth & Jobs'. The Chair of **NECSTouR** Working Group Cultural Tourism and Cultural Sustainability, Mr **Jose Luis Maestro Castineiras** presented good practices and results on the topic in NECSTouR regions.



L-R: K. Van Balen, I.Niculica, A.Buchanan, R.Sijts, President of ECTN, J.Basto, Councilor for Culture and Tourism of the Guimarães Municipality, J.L. Maestro Castineiras

The conference was supported and enhanced by [video messages](#) from **Ana-Claudia Tapardel**, Member of the **European Parliament**, Co-chair of the Intergroup for European Tourism Development, European Parliament Committee on Transport & Tourism Member and **Carlo Corazza**, **European Commission**, **DG Growth**, Head of the Tourism, Emerging and Creative Industries Unit.



Executive Secretary, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the **Council of Europe** and Director of the **European Institute of Cultural Routes** Dr **Stefano Dominioni** made a live intervention online by presenting the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme. Also, provided practical examples of how cultural and responsible tourism is based on the immaterial heritage.



Ieva Treija, Communication Manager and Coordinator of European Cultural Tourism Network presented CHRISTA project and highlighted the project purpose, objectives and tasks with main activities during 4 years.



During the conference programme participants were given the opportunity to demonstrate 21 presentations, selected from the 'Call for Presenters'. This opportunity was seized by 11 different countries, including project CHRISTA partners countries and regions.

All presenters showcased their relevant experience, shared best practices, methods, concepts and provided practical recommendations in 6 parallel sessions. This massively benefits the preservation, deployment and promotion of intangible heritage for responsible and sustainable tourism development with innovative character.

Presentations showcased **oral traditions & communities; social practices, rituals & festive events; traditional craftsmanship; gastronomy & wine; performing arts**, as well as on **knowledge & practices** by 10 destinations (Vastra Gotlad SE, Volos & Thessaloniki EL, Granada & Catalonia ESP, Vidzeme LV, Vila do Conde PT, Pafos CY, Burgas BG, Sibiu RO); 10 universities (3 from GE, 3 from ESP and 4 from RO, PT, PL BG) with 2 consultancy companies from Spain and Greece.



In addition, day was contributed to by a ceremony of the [ECTN Award prize for 'Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism 2016'](#) on the topic 'Intangible Heritage Tourism'. The three winners among 23 candidates were announced and honored with a prize and an official ECTN Award certificate.



L-R: J.Tresserras on behalf of Tossa de Mar (3rd prize), G.Zakite, Director of Turaida Museum Reserve (1st prize), A.Thanos on behalf of Thessaloniki Biennale (2nd prize)

The Conference day was concluded by a Panel debate on the potential of intangible heritage for innovative, sustainable and responsible tourism development between keynote speakers, external expert Dr J.Tresserras and moderated by Mr Manos Vougioukas, Secretary—General of ECTN.



L-R: K. Van Balen, I.Niculica, A.Buchanan, António Ponte, Culture Director for the North of Portugal - Culture Ministry, M.Vougioukas, J.Tresserras, Barcelona University, R.Sijts, President of ECTN





Study visits in Ave region, 24.09.2016

The third day of experience exchange, 24th September, was dedicated to Study visits in Ave region, organized around the main topic by including two days of activities, conclusions and findings presented 'on the ground'.

CHRISTA project partners together with their stakeholders, key note speakers, experts and other external contributors had a marvelous opportunity to visit:

Guimaraes traditional Needlework and "Lovers Pottery 'Oficina'

The railway museum of Arco de Baúlhe and the Tamancos exhibition, Casa da Lã - Bucos - Cabeceiras de Basto - project for the development of traditional wool craft

demonstration of a traditional stick fight Luta do Pau - Bucos - Cabeceiras de Basto



## CHRISTA project Partnership greatly welcomes announced European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

The European Commission has published the Communication COM(2016) 543, regarding its proposal to the European Parliament and Council to designate **2018 as the European Year of Cultural Heritage** (EYCH). The proposal includes several references to tourism, particularly **sustainable cultural tourism**.

In particular, one of the three main objectives of EYCH2018 includes inter-alia:

- ◆ to promote sustainable tourism,
- ◆ to underpin the cultural and creative industries and inspire creation,
- ◆ enhance social cohesion and generate long-term employment.

CHRISTA project Partnership greatly welcomes the EYCH 2018 and will strive to incorporate its activities into the EYCH programme. In particular, with inter-regional Workshops on **Industrial Heritage** in Borås & Göteborg SE, and **Heritage Interpretation** in Sibiu, Romania, to be held during the preparation year 2017, will be enriched in the scope of EYCH and the Workshop on **Innovation and Digitization** in Latvia to be held in early 2018 will be included in the EYCH activities.

Furthermore, the **11th ECTN international conference for Cultural Tourism in Europe**, to be held in September 2018 will be planned as an event within the EYCH framework and programme.

### Insights in the next edition:

- ◆ **Local Stakeholder meetings on 'Intangible Heritage'** in Veneto region IT, Region of Central Macedonia EL, Västergötland SE, Granada ESP, Vidzeme LV, Pafos region CY, Sibiu county RO, Burgas BG and Aveiro region PT
- ◆ **Staff Exchange by partners to encourage 'hands-on' experience**
- ◆ **The 2nd inter-regional thematic workshop 'Industrial Heritage Tourism'**, 22-24 March 2017, Borås, Göteborg, Sweden
- ◆ **CHRISTA dissemination events** with local stakeholders, citizens and media in 9 regions across Europe
- ◆ **6th Advisory Forum "Expanding the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: challenges and opportunities"**, organized by Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Forum on 26-27 October 2016, Vilnius, Lithuania
- ◆ **European Tourism Day 2016**, 29 November 2016 in Brussels
- ◆ **European Heritage Alliance meeting towards 2018**, 9 November 2016 in Leipzig, Germany

[www.interregeurope.eu/christa](http://www.interregeurope.eu/christa)



Follow Us

Contact Us

Meet Us

Visit  
[CHRISTA Library](#)

[Sign up to our  
Newsletter HERE](#)

E-mail:  
[ectn.info@gmail.com](mailto:ectn.info@gmail.com)

Ieva Treija  
Communication Manager  
CHRISTA Management &  
Coordination Team  
(MCTeam)

