

// ESPON Peer Learning Workshop on 30th May 2022 (online)

Sustainable Pathways for the Tourism Industry in Malta

Programme version: 23rd May 2022

All hours indicated in the programme are CEST

// Context and objectives

COVID-19, like earlier pandemics had a devastating influence on the tourism sector, the effects of which are still being felt by the industry. Pandemics often result in a considerable drop in visitor arrivals, and as such the spread of COVID-19 also caused a worldwide downturn in international travel. Demand, spending, consumer confidence and, consequently, supply all dropped during the COVID-19 outbreak, posing difficulties that need urgent resolve.

A major economic contributor of the Maltese economy is tourism, rendering directly and indirectly approximately 30% of the GDP and employing a significant amount of people. Following years of recurrent record growth, bolstered by the country's enhanced connectivity and its reduced seasonality, Malta experienced an unprecedented dip in performance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Maltese tourism sector also faces a number of challenges, such as integrating quality at all levels of the value chain, rebuilding the airline route network, and encouraging collaboration across diverse digital tourism efforts by consolidating and effectively using data. Tourism recovery will need to take into consideration these challenges, along with the new demands of the post-COVID-19 reality and the accelerated effects of climate change that pose direct threats on tourism. This will require a shift away from the previous economic model, implying more sustainable approaches for development.

The Peer learning workshop on Sustainable Pathways for the Tourism Industry in Malta will bring together important players in the Maltese hospitality sector with relevant stakeholders from across Europe to share experiences, practices, high-tech solutions, along with ESPON research evidence to empower sustainable tourism routes in Malta.



// The programme in a nutshell*

Sustainability challenges, strategies, and management tools

10:00	Introduction
10:05	Welcome speech
10:20	Sustainable tourism challenges and strategies in Malta
10:45	Digital transformation for sustainable Maltese tourism development
11:00	Q&A
11:10	Break
11:25	TOURISM - Carrying capacity methodology for tourism
11:45	UNWTO & Google acceleration programme for better tourism planning
12:05	Q&A
12:15	Lunch break

Solutions and pathways for a sustainable and resilient tourism industry

13:15	Technologies and frameworks for a sustainable hospitality sector <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Nearly Zero Energy Hotels❖ ALDREN – ALliance for Deep RENovation in Buildings❖ CSMS: Smart, energy efficient air-condition❖ FLEXIGRID-Interoperable solutions for implementing holistic FLEXibility services in the distribution GRID❖ WATLY: An autonomous and mobile water treatment plant powered by solar energy❖ SCALIBUR: Scalable technologies for bio-urban waste recovery
15:15	Break
15:25	Panel Discussion
16:20	Closing

*sessions accessible online only for registered participants

// Programme

Monday, 30th May 2022

Moderator: Richard Tuffs, Belgium

10:00 Introduction

// Richard Tuffs, Belgium

10:05 Welcome speech

// Wiktor Szydarowski, Director, ESPON EGTC, Luxembourg

// Anthony Gatt, Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Tourism, Malta

// Audrey Anne Callus Randich, Director of EU Funding Policies, Ministry for The Economy, European Funds and Lands, Malta

10:20 Sustainable tourism challenges and strategies in Malta

Overview of the Malta Tourism Strategy 2021 – 2030

// Leslie Vella, Chief Officer Strategic Planning/Deputy to the CEO, Malta Tourism Authority (MTA), Malta

10:45 Digital transformation for sustainable Maltese tourism development

Insights into the Digital Strategic Roadmap for Tourism in the Maltese islands 2030

// Euchar Sultana, Chief Information Officer, Ministry for Tourism, Malta

11.00 Q/A



11:10 **Coffee**

11:25 **TOURISM - Carrying capacity methodology for tourism**

Methodology making use of new technologies and alternative data sources for measuring tourist capacity

// Bernd Schuh, Member of the Board of Directors and Project Manager, ÖIR GmbH, Austria

11:45 **UNWTO & Google acceleration programme for better tourism planning**

Online acceleration programme designed to foster innovation and digital transformation for better tourism planning

// Natalia Bayona, Director of Innovation, Education and Investments, UNWTO World Tourism Organization, Spain

12:05 **Q/A**

12:15 **Lunch**

13:15 **Technologies and frameworks for a sustainable hospitality sector**

Technological solutions and frameworks from across Europe for improving the environmental sustainability of the hospitality industry

// Stavroula Tournaki, Technical University of Crete, Greece (neZEH – Nearly Zero Energy Hotels)

// Jana Bendžalová, ENBEE, Slovakia and Simon Ligier, CSTB, France (ALDREN – Alliance for Deep RENovation in Buildings)

// Ophir Mayer, Elecon Ltd., Israel (CSMS: Smart, energy efficient air-condition)

// Aleida Lostalé, CIRCE, Spain; Spyridon Vlachos, IOSA, Greece; and Marily Efstratiadi, Elin Verd S.A., Greece (FLEXIGRID- Interoperable solutions for implementing holistic FLEXibility services in the distribution GRID)

// Marco Antonio Attisani, Enry's Plex SL., Spain (WATLY: An autonomous and mobile water treatment plant powered by solar energy)

// César Aliaga, ITENE, Spain (SCALIBUR: scalable technologies for bio-urban waste recovery)

15:15 **Coffee**

15:25 **Panel Discussion**

Debate between key Maltese tourism policy, industry, research and capacity-building stakeholders on the future sustainability pathways of the Maltese tourism industry in the view of the presented challenges, solutions and tools

// Kevin Fsadni, Deputy CEO, Malta Tourism Authority (MTA), Malta

// Alan Arrigo, Co-CEO and accountant in the family tourism business and Council Member of The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Malta

// Charles Yousif, Senior Lecturer, Institute for Sustainable Energy, University of Malta (UM), Malta

// Mark Bugeja, Manager, Research and Development, Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS), Malta

// Andrew Agius Muscat, CEO, Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association (MHRA), Malta

16:20 **Closing**

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