

The project « Towards Excellence in Cultural Tourism » was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Six events have been carried out within this project:

Event 1: Kick-off meeting

Participation: The event involved 50 citizens, including 1 participant from the city of Sandanski, Bulgaria, 1 participant from Sepino, Italy, 1 participant from the city of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 2 participants from Agia, Greece, 1 participant from Malta and over 40 participants from Härryda, Sweden.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Härryda, Sweden, from 19.02.2014 to 21.02.2014

Short description: During the Kick-off meeting the representatives of the 6 European partners gathered to draft the structure of the network, its strategic priorities and short-term and long-term goals. During the three – day long workshops the partners agreed on the importance of developing coherent strategies and products to promote and make use of their tangible and intangible heritage for tourism. The exchange of experiences and know-how allowed the experts to identify the common ground for cooperation. On that basis, the TECT Network administrative structure and its strategies and measures were drafted and submitted for discussion and amendment to the local communities.

Event 2: Workshop

Participation: The event involved 120 citizens, including 4 participants from the city of Sandanski, Bulgaria,

4 participants from Sepino, Italy, 4 participants from the city of Härryda, Sweden, 4 participants from Agia, Greece, 4 participants from Malta and nearly 100 participants from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain from 26.03.2014 to 28.03.2014

Short description: During the workshop experts in the fields of culture and tourism development, NGOs and SME representatives took part in technical visits, conferences, lectures, and meetings with cultural and tourist agents and local institutions in order to exchange experiences and conceptualize common strategies and measures for the development of their cultural tourism offer. The TECT Network members discussed the challenges in the fields of culture, tourism and SMEs development on local, national and European levels, shared the policies, addressing these challenges and identified measures for joint actions in the relevant fields. The measures agreed were incorporated into the strategic priorities of the Network and published for comments and suggestions from citizens.

Event 3: Cultural Tourism and Active Ageing Forum

Participation: The event involved 130 citizens, including 6 participants from Sandanski, Bulgaria, 6 participants from Sepino, Italy, 6 participants from Härryda, Sweden, 6 participants from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 6 participants from Malta and over 100 participants from Agia, Greece.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Agia, Greece, from 04.06.2014 to 06.06.2014

Short description: The main purpose of the forum was to exchange experiences and best practices for both the development of new methods for the social inclusion of older people and their participation in the development of cultural tourism, and solidarity and dialogue between generations, as well as to help seniors and young people to learn from each other. European policies for active aging and economic growth, alternative strategies for sustainable development of tourism, community-based tourism and the importance of active stakeholder involvement are some of the topics, presented and discussed during the forum. The meeting brought together a total of 30 international participants who had the chance to meet and cooperate with over a hundred local participants – local authorities, business, NGO representatives, seniors, youth, citizens, artists, artisans, cultural organizations and institutions.

Event 4: Cultural Tourism Fair

Participation: The event involved 130 citizens, including 6 participants from Sandanski, Bulgaria, 6 participants from Sepino, Italy, 6 participants from Härryda, Sweden, 6 participants from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 6 participants from Agia, Greece and over 100 participants from Malta.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Malta, from 02.07.2014 to 04.07.2014

Short description: The main focus of the international fair was the creation of opportunities for the actors in the fields of culture and tourism and create sustainable partnerships, access new markets, exchange ideas. The Cultural Fair brought together artisans, local authorities and small and medium enterprises representatives from all participating in the Network countries. During the workshops with main theme – small end medium enterprises empowerment and active involvement in the cultural tourism offer development, the network objectives and short/ long term priorities were again brought to discussion for the involvement of the expertise of the business. The Cultural Tourism Fair was organized in the Birgu Local Council building, where partners had the chance to present local products, crafts, arts, food, etc.

Event 5: Festival of Cultures

Participation: The event involved 190 citizens, including 6 participants from Malta, 8 participants from Sepino, Italy, 8 participants from Härryda, Sweden, 6 participants from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 6 participants from Agia, Greece and over 150 participants from Sandanski, Bulgaria.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Sandanski, Bulgaria, from 06.09.2014 to 08.09.2014

Short description: The Municipality of Sandanski, Bulgaria hosted the fifth project event - the Festival of Cultures, which was integrated into the Annual International Festival Pirin Folk Sandanski. The main goal of the project event was to create connections among traditional artists and artisans, and to allow citizens to taste the cultural richness and diversity of Europe. The project event was also enriched through the participation in all project activities of four representatives of Education, Research & Consultancy Center – a non-governmental organization from Lithuania with a major focus of activities in the fields of cultural and innovative tourism, civil society issues. The conference included presentations by all partners, and discussions, of their intangible cultural heritage; a presentation of the trends in European culture and tourism and a discussion in reference to the future development of the TECT Network; a round table and discussion on the challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship; the TECT structure and objectives were further enriched with the expertise of the participants and once again published for discussion.

Event 6: Closing Conference

Participation: The event involved 130 citizens, including 6 participants from Malta, 6 participants from Sandanski, Bulgaria, 6 participants from Härryda, Sweden, 6 participants from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, 6 participants from Agia, Greece and over 100 participants from Sepino, Italy.

Location/ Dates: The event took place in Sepino, Italy, from 26.11.2014 to 28.11.2014

Short description: The TECT project Closing Conference took place in Sepino, Italy between 26 and 28 November 2014. 30 international and over a hundred local participants came together. During the event the project results, the structure, short-term and long-term priorities of the network were presented and discussed among project participants and local citizens. Thereafter, the future development of the network was discussed, as well as the opportunities and challenges before it. A set of measures for ensuring the sustainability and development of the network were identified. The agreed network structure foresees annual change of presidency on a rotational principle among partners, therefore, during the meeting in Sepino, the project partners selected the Local Government Association (Malta) to take over the presidency for the following calendar year.