

Cardiff Declaration



EUROPEAN CULTURAL TOURISM NETWORK (ECTN) CARDIFF
DECLARATION ON CULTURAL TOURISM, JULY 2005. The European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN) has been asked by the UK Presidency to take forward the discussions of the conference on Cultural Tourism held by the Luxembourg Presidency. This Declaration results from ECTN's second annual conference in Cardiff 6-8 July 2005 and sets out therecommendations from the conference.

Travel and cultural tourism in particular has a vital role to play in fostering both a greater understanding of the rich diversity of regional cultures of Europe and appreciation of our common European heritage and culture. Through increasing a better understanding between the peoples of Europe cultural tourism can help further European integration. Furthermore, cultural tourism brings about economic benefits, as is indicated in the European Commission Communication on Basic Orientations on Sustainable Tourism. It therefore contributes to the implementation of Lisbon Strategy in respect of economic growth, employment, the well being of populations, and cultural development.

Cultural Tourism encompasses heritage including intangible heritage, contemporary and popular culture, and creativity. Performing, visual and literary arts, museums, built and social heritage, historic landscapes and gardens, crafts, architecture, film, religion, broadcasting, food and sport can be included within the definition of cultural tourism. It links with and benefits from creative industries, which will have a vital role in promoting European Competitiveness. In order to compete in an increasingly competitive global market, collaboration between European regions is essential and regionally based networks such as ECTN have a key role to play in this.

ECTN, strongly supports the current strategic direction put forward on tourism by the EU Institutions, in particular the European Commission Communication on "Basic Orientations for the sustainability of the European Tourism", the European Spatial Development Perspective, the proposed work of the Tourism Sustainability Group foreseen in that Communication and notes the draft Report and Motion for an EP Resolution of Mr Luis Queiro', MEP, on "New prospects and new challenges for sustainable European tourism" which was presented to the EP Committee on Transport and Tourism in March 2005.

Having regard to the Luxembourg Declaration, the Cardiff conference wishes to make the following recommendations to the institutions of the European Union to promote cooperation at both the member state and regional/local level in respect of cultural tourism:

1. Further measures are needed to improve processes that seek to integrate the new member states and their organised civil society

2. Cultural tourism must be founded on quality and authenticity and encompass the contemporary as well as the historical.
3. Cultural Tourism needs to benefit to a greater extent from the efforts of applied research in areas such as management tools and good governance. The cultural tourism sector should encourage initiatives that take full advantage of the new technologies and which encourage visitors to develop a real understanding of the local culture and heritage before and during the visit.
4. There should be a better understanding of visitor needs, to ensure that the visitor has a quality overall experience including the provision of appropriate interpretation to aid cultural understanding.
5. It is important to provide a code of good practice in the development of cultural tourism based on research into best practice and visitor/host needs (ECTN is seeking to provide such a guide through its INTERREG IIC project).
6. Measures to support cultural diversity and sustainable development including initiatives that reinforce a sense of place, and spread the benefits of cultural tourism seasonally and geographically. Initiatives should respect the carrying capacity of the host community and bring benefits to the host community through adopting destination management techniques such as Integrated Quality Management.
7. Cultural tourism destinations should only be developed with the direct involvement and support of the host communities.
8. Cooperation between all stakeholders should be pursued, in particular between the public, the private and not for profit sectors, and between the tourist, cultural and heritage sectors to protect cultural heritage and help encourage a vibrant cultural sector.
9. If regions are to make full use of their heritage in creating a unique sense of place, they must work closely with private operators. Hoteliers, restaurateurs and operators of other paid-for attractions should be at the centre of plans for promoting cultural tourism alongside the cultural providers.
- 10 Raising awareness of citizens of their local culture and heritage through education and training, particularly for those working in tourism industry is essential for ensuring a quality visitor experience and that this heritage and culture is cherished.
11. Developing an improved dialogue between the European Union and Council of Europe programmes in respect of Cultural Tourism. ECTN Cardiff Declaration on Cultural Tourism 2005