



LEADING EXAMPLES OF SMART AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES IN EUROPE 2023





The European Capital of Smart Tourism initiative is a preparatory action proposed by the European Parliament and is being implemented by the European Commission since 2018. It gives European cities the opportunity to share their exemplary practices as smart tourism destinations and awards the title of European Capital of Smart Tourism through an EU-wide competition to those cities that implement the most outstanding measures.

The initiative showcases accomplishments by cities in smart tourism across the EU in the following areas:

SUSTAINABILITY

DIGITALISATION

**CULTURAL HERITAGE
& CREATIVITY**

ACCESSIBILITY

In the first edition of the competition, Helsinki and Lyon won the 2019 European Capital of Smart Tourism titles. In the 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism competition, Gothenburg and Málaga won the 2020 European Capital of Smart Tourism titles. The third edition of the competition was won by Bordeaux and València in 2022. The current 2023 European Capitals of Smart Tourism are Pafos and Seville.

The selection of best practices compiled in this booklet has been derived from the applications the aforementioned cities submitted to the 2023 competition and solely presents and relies on the information and data that the cities have submitted in their applications.

More information available at www.smarttourismcapital.eu





ACCESSIBILITY

Navigation and Accessibility for Smart Tourism

The “Seville Smart Accessibility Tourist & Events” is an innovative project supported by the Spanish government and the European Union to improve accessibility, and urban space management through the use of ICT-based actions. This project uses GIS technology and AI tools for the management and decision-making processes behind the recommended spaces and routes between attractions.

All this information is shared with citizens and tourists through the SEVILLE ACCESSIBLE app. This app (multi-platform and multi-language) combines information on accessibility and mobility in real time with tourist information allowing for greater awareness and insight into how crowded a public space really is, being able to plan accessible itineraries, have updated tourist information and knowing the status and situation on the use of unsure road conditions.





SUSTAINABILITY

Tackling the future of our climate with eCity Sevilla

In order to make tourism a sustainable partner in the future of the city, the eCity Sevilla Pilot Project was created as a private-public partnership project to transform the Cartuja Science and Technology Park (PCT Cartuja) into a carbon-neutral, sustainable, and innovative island. The overarching objective is to provide a platform on which to create the future of a carbon neutral city and to become an international reference for sustainable urban planning. To this end, Seville is planning this conversion to take full advantage of existing and innovative sustainable and renewable energy sources, cycle paths, helping to ensure self-sufficiency in energy consumption.



DIGITALISATION

Discovering the old with the new

The Seville World Heritage portal allows tourist and residents alike to experience the world heritage sites in Seville in a digital and barrier free environment. The portal offers rich descriptions of the world heritage site, the types of architecture and the historical context of all 187 patrimonial elements of the site and its 8 surrounding districts. In doing so the city is transporting its historic heritage into a digital space that enables greater access to the information and a virtual space for cultural communication to transpire. In addition, visitors can now engage with the Alcazar of Seville in a digital format as it has been given a complete 3D reconstruction allowing for AR and VR engagement. This is part of complete digital transformation of the World heritage sites in Seville that are aimed at allowing further accessibility, insight, and interest in the storied history of the city.



CULTURAL HERITAGE & CREATIVITY

From sun loungers to culture vultures

The recovery, rehabilitation, and reclamation of Fabrica de Artilleria in Seville has been at the heart of an effort to rejuvenate the area and to create a space for the new Centro Magallanes for Entrepreneurship of Cultural and Creative Industries. This deteriorating urban space has been reclaimed by the city to create a new area for creativity and cultural heritage to flourish. As a part of this project, 9,500 square meters of area will be allocated for the arrangement of various spaces for the emergence of new business ideas of the business nursery-coworking type, a multipurpose experimental scenic place, multidisciplinary workshops, recording studios, exhibition rooms and offices, among others. For the development of these uses, the provision of five interconnected spaces, with different functionalities, has been planned.





Pafos Harbour
© Pafos Regional Board of Tourism



Ancient Odeon
© Pafos Regional Board of Tourism

ACCESSIBILITY

Smart parking & Accessibility with DESTI-SMART

Pafos Smart Parking System is an innovative solution to the problem of finding parking in the city of Pafos. The system uses state-of-the-art technology to provide real-time information on available parking spaces, making it easy for citizens and visitors to find a spot quickly and easily. Additionally, the system promotes sustainability by reducing the amount of time and fuel wasted by drivers searching for parking, which helps to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion. Overall, the smart parking system is easy to use and helps to make the experience of visiting Pafos more enjoyable for tourists.

Pafos has been an active participant in the DESTI SMART Project in order to establish a policy framework for accessibility provision for visitors with mobility handicaps (disabled, elderly, infirm, families with young children) at tourist attractions. This cross-topic project has enabled Pafos to regard accessible tourism through multiple perspectives such as low carbon emission alternatives, efficient and resilient accessible tourism options, and policy learning as well as capacity building for the future.

Further more braille as well as smart signs have been installed at the Pafos UNESCO Archaeological park, while most of the beaches in the area are accessible offering reserved parking facilities, access ramps, walkways, amphibious chairs, accessible changing rooms etc.





Aphrodite's Birthplace
© Pafos Regional Board of Tourism



House of Dionysos Mosaic Floors
© Pafos Regional Board of Tourism

SUSTAINABILITY

Making Cycling & Walking Attractive, the Smart Way

Pafos has a series of cycling paths that cover over 600 km with 9 dedicated routes for visitors to choose from as well as 22 walking trails as a low-carbon form of mobility, exploring the city and its surrounding areas. Additionally, the cycling routes have been complimented with the introduction of Smart Signs (QR Codes) to help promote and provide rich, complete, and dynamic information about the cycling experience in Pafos.



DIGITALISATION

Myth of Aphrodite App & AR Experience

This Augmented Reality (AR) app was firstly introduced as a pilot action and has now been rolled out into a complete experience of the myth of Aphrodite. Users can download the app for free and enjoy, explore, and get informed about the fascinating myth of Aphrodite, Goddess of love and beauty. The app contains useful information and helps guide users through the geography of the myth as well as providing some AR opportunities at 4 locations along the route. Furthermore, a smart App is available

to explore the Pafos UNESCO Archaeological park which serves as a digital guide, includes content and info in several languages, videos and a rich photo gallery for each location as well as 360 tours.



CULTURAL HERITAGE & CREATIVITY

Bridging Continents, Cultures, and History – The European Cultural Route

Together with the European Cultural Tourism Network, Pafos has formed the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation that is designed to develop, implement, manage, promote, and support, the European Cultural Route: “In the footsteps of St Paul, the Apostle of the Nations”. This transnational, cultural route aims to highlight the rich cultural heritage of the route that not only connects historic cities, cultures and countries but showcases a route into the annals of European history. It is an example of international partnership for the promotion, management, and support of shared European cultural heritage and its research. Over the years, Pafos has protected cultural heritage but also transformed the deteriorated old town into a modern, vibrant destination offering all year round innovative experiences from arts and crafts workshops to shops, offices, multipurpose spaces, cultural events and more.





KRA

The European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) is an EU initiative implemented by the European Commission. Its aim is to recognise and award smaller destinations that have implemented successful strategies to boost sustainable tourism through green transition practices.

The EDEN initiative aims to:

- showcase the best achievements in sustainable tourism and green transition practices across smaller European destinations
- promote the development of sustainable tourism in destinations, bringing value to the economy, the planet and the people
- establish a framework for participating destinations to exchange best practices and create opportunities for cooperation and new partnerships

In 2022, Middelfart (Denmark) was named as European Destination of Excellence. The current 2023 European Destination of Excellence is Kranj (Slovenia) whose application included the following best practices.



KRANJ |

2023 European Destination of Excellence

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eden/current-destinations_en

<https://www.visitkranj.com/en>

A DEDICATED TEAM FOR SUSTAINABLE MEASURES

In Kranj, a Green Team, made up of more than 20 members from different institutions within the city, is collecting data, formulating development measures and targets, planning action plans and working towards their implementation. For Kranj, tourism industry should be part of sustainable activities. To achieve overall sustainable development in the field of tourism, regular annual meetings are also organised for business partners and the tourism industry to discuss trends and directions, as well as educational workshops.



KRANJ LONG TABLE, A GREEN CULINARY EVENT

Following the global Covid-19 pandemic, Kranj decided to create the Kranj Long Table, a green culinary event to help the catering sector. Seven Kranj chefs with their assistants and staff prepared and served a menu with 100 % local ingredients, for 100 seating visitors in the garden of the Khislstein castle. No food was left, guests took with them any excess food in recyclable containers. Part of the profits went towards meals for Kranj Social Work Centre's clients. A donation of €2000 was given to a family in need. To continue the sustainability level, the Kranj Long Table was the first event where the carbon footprint was measured and is now an example for more climate-friendly tourism event in Slovenia. By promoting sustainable mobility for guests and using electricity from renewable sources, the organiser avoided 266 kg of CO₂ and reduced the event's carbon footprint by 18 %.



A LARGE E-BIKE NETWORK TO ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

For several years now, Kranj is promoting sustainable mobility and implementing different measures, becoming then best e-mobility municipality in Slovenia in 2021. Indeed, Kranj has the country's largest electrified bike rental system, KRskOLESOM, with 29 stations, for 125 bicycles and 75 e-bikes. This system is part of a larger network named Gorenjska.bike. The latter connects seven municipalities in the region, allowing users to rent and return a bike in different locations. In total, more than 50 stations with 40 % of electrically assisted bikes are available.





**EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS
OF EXCELLENCE**
 **SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM PIONEER**