

Pillar 4 – Sustainable Tourism

under the programme of Croatia's presidency of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (AII)

25th October 2023

**Adriatic-Ionian Initiative Round Table on
Development of Green Tourism Products and
Balanced Tourism Development**

Venue

Hotel International, Zagreb, Croatia

9:30 – 10:00 Registration and welcome coffee

10:00 Opening/Welcome Speeches

- Amb. Fabio Pigliapoco, Head of the Permanent Secretariat, Adriatic-Ionian Initiative
- Mr. Tonči Glavina, State Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Republic of Croatia (tbc)

Moderator

- Damira Gregoret Bobić

Panellists

- H.E. Mr. Riza Poda, Ambassador of Albania to Croatia, *Albanian Tourism Model* (tbc)
- Jelena Šobat, *Transition of Croatian Tourism*, Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Croatia
- *Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism*, Slovenian Tourist Board (tbc)

- Izidora Marković Vukadin, PhD, *Measuring sustainability of tourism on macro and micro level*, Institute for Tourism, Zagreb
- Antonela Svilarić, *Dubrovnik – City of sustainable tourism*, City of Dubrovnik
- Jasmina Mrkonja, *Destination Slunj Rastoke - Our Story*, Tourist Board Slunj, Croatia
- Ana Štrbenac, Mag. Biol., *Enhancing Sustainable Visitor Management in EUSAIR Region Protected Areas*, EUSAIR cross-pillar project concept, Stenella Consulting d.o.o.
- Ivica Projić, *Open Innovation for Green and Digital Destination Transformation - "InnoVET Tourism"*, Ericsson Nikola Tesla
- Kristina Brščić, PhD, *Dialogue4Tourism - Institutional Dialogue on Sustainable Tourism and Governance in the Euro-Med Area*, Institute of Agriculture and Tourism, Poreč, Croatia

13:00 Networking Lunch

AIM:

Round table aims to highlight the importance of developing green tourism products and achieving balanced approach to tourism development. The word *balance* has a positive significance that should fit in the tourism of the future and both people and the environment would benefit from such development.

Tourism development in the EUSAIR region lacks balance in several aspects: temporal and spatial imbalance of tourism activities, imbalanced distribution of burden between geographical areas, and a very distinct seasonal nature of business operation.

Many EUSAIR member states introduced new strategies and action plans that emphasize the importance of balancing between periods of high and low tourism season and the number of tourists and local residents, encourage new construction and renovating old buildings for tourism purpose. To have balance in life, we need to measure the ingredients. Today, we have different tools for measuring balanced tourism. There is lots of data helping tourism destination managers, communities, business owners and policy makers to find the right measure for developing sustainable tourism thus society.

One of the priorities of Croatian Presidency of EUSAIR is promotion of the application of measurable indicators of sustainable tourism.

To achieve balanced tourism development EUSAIR region will focus on creating green tourism products defining green as responsible and sustainable.

Responsible management of tourism and tourist destination should remain one of the main priority goals of the Strategy.

We hope this round table will inspire our EUSAIR members in going forward in tourism, respecting the residents needs and protecting the environment for future generations.

The following questions will be addressed:

1. How would you define/describe a term *balanced tourism*? Do we have tools for developing balanced tourism? Or do we yet have to develop and introduce them?
2. How can regulatory framework (national strategies and action plans, EUSAIR Action Plan, EU Agenda for Tourism 2030, Transition Pathway for Tourism) contribute to fostering a more responsible and harmonious relationship between tourism, local communities, and the environment?
3. When considering the concept of labelling a tourist product as environmentally friendly or "green," do you automatically associate it with inland areas such as mountains, plains, and rivers, as opposed to coastal regions? Can you provide an example of a green tourist product? Are there also "blue" tourist products that come to mind?
4. Are terms like "sustainable tourism," "responsible tourism," and "green tourist product" just marketing concepts, or do we have a responsibility to integrate them into mainstream policies and practices?

We hope that all participants will actively engage in the open discussion on these matters.

We also want to discuss examples of good practice and to exchange different experiences of EUSAIR member countries in this regard.