BARCELONA DECLARATION OF TOURISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE:
"BETTER PLACES TO LIVE, BETTER PLACES TO VISIT"

PRELUDE

In light of the **2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH 2018**), NECSTouR, the Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism, launched a Pan-European Dialogue on Tourism and Cultural Heritage, in cooperation with Europa Nostra, European Travel Commission and European Cultural Tourism Network with the support of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

The goal of this initiative is to take advantage of this unique momentum and foster greater synergy between tourism and cultural stakeholders. It seeks to demonstrate what both sectors can achieve by working respectfully more closely together, for the benefit of European citizens and cultural heritage as well as businesses, visitors and destinations.

During the NECSTouR international workshop **"Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit"**, which took place in Barcelona on the 19th April 2018, the Barcelona Declaration was launched with the aim of improving the sustainability and competitiveness of the social and cultural impacts of tourism in Europe. It acknowledged previous existing declarations and documents related to tourism and cultural heritage from bodies such as Council of Europe, European Commission, Europa Nostra, European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN), International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), among others.

The declaration assumes the collective commitment of cultural heritage and tourism stakeholders towards the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),** as published by the UNWTO, and aims to deliver a **legacy for Europe** beyond the 2018 European Year of Cultural heritage, thus contributing further to the implementation of Agenda 2030 of the United Nations.

As stated in the **UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (1999)**, travelling is an equal right for all those who inhabit our planet. Everyone should have the opportunity to discover destinations and the wide range of cultural and natural heritage within them, with a view to **promoting tolerance, respect and appreciating diversity.**

As highlighted in the **Berlin Call to Action (2018)**, cultural heritage connects generations as it reflects cross-fertilisations and cross-border movements of people and ideas over many centuries of shared history. Cultural heritage is the basis for a respectful and enriching dialogue and interaction within and between communities in Europe but also with other cultures of the world.

We therefore believe that Tourism and Cultural Heritage can strengthen **European Social Cohesion** by revaluing Europe's Cultural Heritage and bringing it to life, reinforcing the sense of belonging and the greater understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe, as well as fostering economic growth and job development.

This Declaration aims to be an open initiative, welcoming all stakeholders willing to engage with this commitment - stakeholders such as tourism and cultural public administrations, private stakeholders and civil society representatives, academics and experts from different fields, as well as the citizens of and visitors to destinations.

Cultural heritage is the essence of a territory that also constitutes an inherent value for local communities. It is one of the main assets of a tourism destination. It is present in all aspects of a resident's life through values, traditions, ethics and social behavior, as well as more tangible cultural symbols such as monuments, sites, art, crafts and inventions, making them attractive places for residents and visitors to live, work, visit and enjoy.

Tourism can provide added value to cultural heritage. It can be an incentive to preserve heritage and to interpret it making it alive and enjoyable, by developing first-hand experiences for visitors and residents alike. Tourism is also a key factor in promoting the sustainability of cultural heritage by raising awareness of its uniqueness and importance, balancing properly its promotion and protection while contributing to its safeguard.

European tourism destinations are facing a range of **challenges** when it comes to responsibly balancing the uses of cultural heritage, the demands of the tourism industry and the needs of the local community. Many destinations are increasingly confronted with the challenges and opportunities of tourism in relation to cultural heritage: the visitor saturation of some areas and the need in others for more visitors; the importance of authenticity and concerns about the loss of authenticity; and local customs and ways of life vs the impact of transient visitors, among others.

The commitment to cultural and tourism sustainability requires **leadership**, **coordination** and **cooperation** among all stakeholders - including national, regional and local governments, the private sector, academics, researchers and civil society - in a way that delivers a shared vision and clear objectives for a better balance between residents, visitors and cultural heritage.

There are innumerable benefits and opportunities to be gained through better cooperation between tourism and cultural heritage. The reinforcement of a common vision and goals by establishing a **joint governance model** to overcome these shared challenges can not only improve the current situation and reduce the detrimental impacts of tourism, but also generate great opportunities related to innovation, digitalisation, creativity, skills, talent development and entrepreneurship, among others.

On the basis of the above statements and the exchanges undertaken throughout the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage between the cultural heritage and tourism stakeholders, we the supporters/signatories of this, ***the Barcelona Declaration for Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit*** call for:

OUR CALL

We call for the implementation of five key principles which should be jointly applied in order to make the "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit" come true:

Principle 1: SMART AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE
"What is good for residents is good for visitors"

Article 1.1 The residents - the local community - should be the main beneficiaries of any activity developed in the place they live. They must be consulted and included in the decision-making process from its early stage. Community empowerment and community participation are key factors in avoiding conflicts between the shared uses of cultural heritage sites/places between residents and visitors.

National, regional and local authorities should integrate a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and participatory approach to cultural/tourism related initiatives, from decision-making and implementation to monitoring. This horizontal approach will not only share commitment and responsibilities but it will also bring opportunities for social innovation, co-creation and joint investment. Tourism planning and heritage interpretation need to acknowledge the diversity of stakeholders and reflect the plurality of different points of view.

Article 1.2   The tourism and cultural heritage sectors should align funding mechanisms through public-private partnerships in order to favour the innovative potential of both sectors through product development, heritage interpretation, digitalisation and business intelligence. The use of data is crucial when developing and managing cultural / tourism related initiatives beneficial for residents and visitors.

Article 1.3   The resilience of the destinations and the cultural-tourism related businesses is based on their capacity to quickly adapt to challenges. It is crucial to foster joint capacity building and training between tourism and cultural heritage managing authorities to encourage creative thinking and develop innovative services and solutions.

Principle 2: ADDING VALUE TO THE SENSE OF PLACE
"Residents are part of the cultural / tourism experience and the best ambassadors of their territory and identity"

Article 2.1   Cultural heritage, especially intangible heritage, is a living concept that is strongly rooted to the local community. Residents are an active part of this heritage - they contribute to the authenticity of a place, bringing it to life, preserving and conserving their unique culture and irreplaceable legacy (traditions, food, historical sites, etc.) while at the same time helping guarantee its sustainability.

Article 2.2   Tourism can enhance the sense of place of a territory by adding value to the tangible and intangible cultural heritage through interpreting the heritage and the creation of experiences, attractive to both residents and visitors and keeping the balance between the uses and users of cultural heritage. Residents should feel ownership of their public spaces and their cultural heritage, so as to feel empowered and proud of tourism in their territories.

Article 2.3   A change of mindset of all the actors, both public and private, involved in the cultural/tourism experience is needed to safeguard the integrity of cultural heritage and add value to the experiences offered. Impartial interpretation of history and traditions, engaging storytelling, and the sharing of know-how are powerful tools to foster visitors' respect for the place they are visiting and create better awareness of the potential impacts of their actions.

Article 2.4   Digital tools including social media can help to generate attraction and get acquainted with lifestyles, values, traditions and sites. They can therefore increase empathy for and commitment to the place and its people, while facilitating social interaction. New technologies also have a great capacity to encourage more genuine and participatory experiences and are great tools to better manage tourism flows and impacts.

Article 2.5   Cultural/Tourism activities must be open and available to everyone, enabling all to enjoy the cultural heritage without discrimination.

Principle 3: USING A HOLISTIC VISION FOR MARKETING AND PRESERVATION
"Promote hidden cultural heritage while being prudent in promoting overexposed ones"

Article 3.1   Tourism and cultural stakeholders should embrace a holistic marketing approach and encourage marketing activities that promote authenticity and respect for local communities and their way of life. In this way, it can create a more positive impact for the destination, its businesses and citizens. It should also contribute to the safeguard of cultural heritage, which implies taking into account the vulnerability of the site, leading sometimes to preventing the opening to visitors.

Article 3.2   Promote initiatives/experiences that have the potential to generate a positive impact for the destination, show hidden heritage, surprise visitors and enhance the authenticity of the destination. Create through professional heritage interpretation a cultural content for meaningful and unique experiences that builds relations between the place and the people, and which will foster loyalty and respect to all tourism sites and related professions.

Article 3.3   It is important to develop cultural/tourism experiences based on value over volume, and which inspire visitors to take their time in visiting and getting to know better the place and its identity in order to understand and appreciate its significance.

Article 3.4   Corporate Social Responsibility standards should be considered and promoted by public and private stakeholders including a special focus not only on the impacts of tourism on the environment but also on its impacts on local communities, society, including minority groups, and culture.

Principle 4: BALANCING PLACE, PEOPLE AND BUSINESS
"Better measure to better manage "

Article 4.1   In the search for an adequate balance between tourism activities, cultural heritage and impacts on the local community, better management of tourism/culture initiatives is the obvious solution but at the same time it is one of the greatest challenges.

Article 4.2   Measuring the carrying capacity of a cultural heritage site or place is crucial in order to understand the capacity this site/place has with regards to its environmental, economic and socio-cultural dimension. The carrying capacity should be taken into consideration as a strategic indicator to better manage visitor flows and to better define the activities developed in a site/place.

Article 4.3   The use of indicators to better manage the performances of cultural heritage sites / tourism destinations should go beyond the traditional - quantitative ones and should incorporate innovative aspects and targets, addressing more qualitative performance indicators such as the perception of residents towards tourism and /or the personal relationship visitors could build to a site, to mention some examples.

Article 4.4   Tourism and cultural heritage public and private stakeholders should agree on the most appropriate indicators to be used to better manage smart and sustainable destinations and sites, they should establish an effective data collection system that is adaptable should any unforeseen situation arise.

Article 4.5   The indicators should enable relevant cultural heritage and tourism managers – such as tourism bodies and destination marketing organisations - to incorporate suitable scenario planning in order to consider any necessary limits or quotas and actions necessary for sustainable tourism development, while incentivising the exchange of good practices and solutions that have proved to be successful elsewhere.

Principle 5: CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
"Citizens' and visitors' search for new and transformative experiences"

Article 5.1   It has been widely recognised that the best cultural / tourism experiences are those that enable us to learn and grow. Knowledge transfer as well as interaction and exchange with local people, communities and traditions is at the heart of this.

Article 5.2   The intercultural dialogue between citizens and visitors is a good way to ensure the safeguarding of cultural heritage, as well as creating greater appreciation and respect for other identities and traditions. In this regard, tourism should not only be seen as an "economic activity" but also as a "human activity" with valuable potential to contribute to the understanding and respect of people, their places and culture. Cultural heritage sites offer a great opportunity to facilitate these encounters and exchanges between visitors and residents.

Article 5.3   The "new players" such as social media and digital platforms can also reinforce the intercultural exchanges and dialogue between residents and visitors during the different phases of travel (before, during and after) while contributing to the realisation of this human dimension of travelling.

Article 5.4   Young people have a key role to play in this intercultural dialogue and their respect and appreciation for European cultural diversity. They represent a driving force of change, being the future generation of travelers and citizens in Europe.

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Initiated by:

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