

ETC AND UNWTO DISCUSS TRANSNATIONAL THEMES AND ROUTES IN GALICIA

The European Travel Commission (ETC) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) held an international seminar in Santiago de Compostela to exchange best practices on how to develop and effectively manage transnational tourism themes and routes. The ETC-UNWTO International Seminar on Marketing Transnational Tourism Themes and Routes was hosted by the Xunta de Galicia and Turespaña on 16-17 November 2017 in the emblematic city of Santiago de Compostela, final destination of the thousand-year-old pilgrim route the Way of St. James.

The two-day event provided insights into the development, management and promotion of transnational tourism themes and routes in Europe and worldwide, as well as practical guidance for National Tourism Organization (NTOs), Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and National Tourism Administrations (NTAs) on how to market and promote destinations through transnational thematic tourism experiences and products.

“Destinations are at their best when they can benefit from shared experiences and best-practice examples” said UNWTO Executive Director Zhu Shanzhong. In this regard, “collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders involved are vital to ensure the success of transnational initiatives”, he added.

The international seminar drew the participation of European NTOs, DMOs and travel trade entities, as well as representatives from the European Commission (EC), the European Parliament (EP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Tourism Association (ETOA) and the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR), among others.

The event was the occasion to launch the new ETC-UNWTO Handbook on Transnational Tourism Themes and Routes, which provides step-by-step guidance on how to achieve successful themed transnational tourism.

“ETC and UNWTO acknowledge the importance of transnational collaboration in tourism as the competition is becoming increasingly regional rather than national. Today, with the launch of the Handbook on Marketing Transnational Tourism Themes and Routes, we seek to support the work of tourism authorities, managers and experts in this direction” said ETC President Peter de Wilde.

“Europe is much more than its main iconic spots and therefore we should develop transnational policies that help us attract visitors to other destinations”, argued Nava Castro, Director of Tourism of Galicia. Castro referred to the Camino de Santiago and its recognition as the First European Cultural Itinerary and its cultural and spiritual dimensions worldwide. As highlighted, the Camino has become an international reference as it has welcome over 300,000 pilgrims on foot, by bicycle or on horseback of up to 179 different nationalities only in 2017. Only 3,000 visitors were doing the Camino three decades ago.

At the closing of the seminar, the President of Galicia Alberto Nuñez Feijóo reiterated the commitment of Galicia to a responsible, sustainable and accessible tourism, in the framework of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

[Note to editors](#)

About the European Travel Commission

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 to promote Europe as a tourist destination to the long-haul markets outside of Europe, originally in the USA and later in Canada, Latin America and Asia. It currently has 32 member NTOs, including 8 from outside the European Union. Europe is the world's no. 1 tourist destination with 615 million international arrivals in 2016 and more than 50% of the market share of worldwide tourism.

For further information: ETC's corporate website <http://www.etc-corporate.org> is aimed at industry, government and educational personnel interested in tourism to Europe. Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC's consumer portal <http://www.visiteurope.com>.