

24th European Tourism Forum

3 - 4 December 2025

Enhancing the value of European tourism

- Building resilience by boosting competitiveness the sustainable way

The Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in collaboration with the European Commission, is proud to host the 24th European Tourism Forum on 3 - 4 December 2025.

The Danish Presidency takes place at a pivotal time for the EU. The EU finds itself in a new international order, marked by uncertainty, global strategic and economic competition and a rising level of conflict. This requires a stronger EU with a clear and defined global role. A stronger sense of European identity is on the rise and Denmark works to promote a resilient and competitive European tourism industry which is economically viable while growing in harmony with local communities and the environment.

Building on Member States' digital and data-driven achievements, the European Tourism Forum will provide a platform for sharing experiences and insights on data access, digitalisation and sustainability. It encourages an open dialogue on how European tourism can best navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Through the European Tourism Forum, the Danish Presidency seeks to strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding among Member States and stakeholders, and to highlight tourism's vital role in Europe's broader economic and social value creation.

Theme presentation

This year's European Tourism Forum will address the following three key areas both in plenum and in breakout sessions:

Theme 1: Better Data and Shared Intelligence for European Tourism

European tourism increasingly operates in an ecosystem where visitor choices, business visibility, market access, and even destination success are shaped by digital platforms. In this landscape, destinations and businesses cannot rely solely on their own data; they depend on the ability to connect, share, and interpret data and insights together to remain competitive and responsible.

This theme explores how Europe can strengthen its tourism ecosystem through better data and shared intelligence – from the European Tourism Data Space and global travel analytics to open-source models of industry collaboration and more granular, people-centered insights emerging from community level.

We examine how shared data models can ensure fair access to insights, how diversified data sources can reduce hidden bias, and build transparency and trust, enabling responsible and resilient futures for European tourism.

Thought starters for the breakout session:

- How can we make high-quality, ethical, unbiased, and transparent data more accessible and useful to DMOs and SMEs across Europe, reinforcing guest relationships and community wellbeing?
- What barriers or challenges exist for more open-source sharing of both data, insights and practices across European destinations, and how can shared data initiatives strengthen Europe's position in a platform-dominated marketplace? (DataSpace)

Theme 2: Digital Transformation – AI, Innovation, and Europe's Creative Edge

AI is transforming how inspiration is sparked, how brands connect, how travellers discover places, and how European experiences and destinations are marketed. For Europe, the opportunity is bigger than adopting new tools – it's about using AI and emerging technologies to amplify creativity and identify new forms of discoverability in a global marketplace.

This theme explores how destinations, brands, and tourism businesses are using AI to create smarter campaigns, personalise content at scale, build new experiences and products – all without losing the authenticity, cultural richness and creative spark that define Europe’s brand. From national tourism branding and global marketing to AI-powered trip design and search, this session will explore how AI is reshaping the tourism landscape and what it will take to turn this transportation into a competitive advantage for European tourism?

Thought starters for the breakout session:

- How is AI reshaping the way destinations and brands attract and inspire travellers and what does truly “AI-native” tourism marketing look like when new market opportunities emerge with personalised content, design trips and new paths to discoverability?
- How do we use AI to scale creativity and efficiency without losing authenticity and can Europe’s cultural richness and creative traditions become its competitive edge in an AI-powered world?

Theme 3: Balanced Tourism – Community Connection and Europe’s Social Fabric

Tourism has always been more than travel — it’s about people meeting people, learning tolerance through experiencing other cultures and ways of living, and discovering our shared humanity across borders. At a time when Europe faces polarization, social challenges, and wide debate on civil space and rights, tourism can play a vital role in rebuilding trust and social cohesion by connecting communities and visitors, contributing to an open mindset of both travellers and locals, and making democracy tangible in everyday encounters.

We must be working closely with local communities, creating meaningful partnerships that allow residents to showcase their values, traditions, and ways of life. By respecting local traditions and lifestyles, we are ensuring that tourism development aligns with the needs and rhythms of local people.

Tourism must be seen not just as an economic activity, but as a bridge for inclusion, participation, and belonging — a powerful tool for uniting people and nurturing sustainable, thriving societies.

Thought starters for the breakout session:

- How do we design tourism that creates clear benefits for residents and how can tourism actively strengthen social cohesion, identity, and democratic resilience?
- How can tourism policy support inclusion, tolerance, and local pride as part of social sustainability?

3 December

Time	Programme
08.30-09.00	Registration and coffee
09.00-09.25	<p>Welcome and launch of the conference</p> <p>Welcome by the Danish Presidency, the Danish Minister for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Morten Dahlin.</p> <p>Introduction from European Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism, Apostolos Tzitzikostas</p> <p>Introduction from Andreea Staicu, Head of Tourism Sector, DG MOVE, The European Commission</p> <p><i>Master of Ceremonies: Signe Jungersted, CEO and Founding Partner, Group NAO</i></p>
09.25-10.45	<p>Tourism for a Competitive Europe: Digital, Human, and Sustainable Futures</p> <p>Keynote speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lars Sandahl Sørensen, CEO, Danish Industry • Olivier Ponti, Director of Intelligence & Marketing, ForwardKeys • Janette Roush, Senior Vice President of Innovation & Chief AI Officer, Brand USA • Carolin Wehrhahn, Head of EU Public Affairs, Booking.com
10.45-11.15	Coffee break

11.15-12.00 **Deep dive into the main themes of the conference**

Thematic keynote speakers:

Better Data and Shared Intelligence for European Tourism
by Misa Labarile, Policy Officer Tourism, EU Commission

Digital Transformation - AI, Innovation, and Europe's Creative Edge
by Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, TravelTech for Scotland / Future Studies at
University of Edinburgh

Balanced Tourism – Community Connection and Europe's Social Fabric
by Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures
Institute / Advisory Board member, UNWTO

12.00-13.00 Lunch break

13.00-14.30 **Breakout sessions** *Choose one of the three parallel sessions*

Theme 1: Better Data and Shared Intelligence for European Tourism

Speakers:

- Misa Labarile, Policy Officer Tourism, EU Commission
- Olivier Ponti, Director of Intelligence & Marketing, ForwardKeys
- Eric Bakermans, Director Meeting and Conventions, NBTC
- Liselott Stenfeldt, Director of Research and Development, Gehl Architects

Moderator: Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD

Theme 2: Digital Transformation – AI, Innovation, and Europe's Creative Edge

Speakers:

- Miguel Gallego, Head of Marketing & Communication, European Travel Commission
- Janette Roush, Senior Vice President of Innovation & Chief AI Officer, Brand USA
- Tom Krackeler, Senior Vice President of Products, Mindtrip
- Carolin Wehrhahn, Head of EU Public Affairs, Booking.com

Moderator: Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, TravelTech for Scotland / Future Studies at University of Edinburgh

Theme 3: Balanced Tourism – Community Connection and Europe's Social Fabric

Speakers:

- Rikke Holm Petersen, Director of Marketing, Communication and Behaviour, Wonderful Copenhagen
- Pedro H. Oliver, MD, Fundacion Turismo Palma 365
- Oleksandr Vesheleni, Head of Tourism Development and Digitalization, State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine
- Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute/Advisory Board member, UNWTO

Moderator: Signe Jungersted, CEO, Group NAO

14.30-15.00 Coffee break

15.00-15.35 **Reflections from breakout sessions**

Panel:

- Alexandros Vassilikos, HOTREC President
- Misa Labarile, Policy Officer Tourism of the EU Commission
- Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, TravelTech for Scotland / Future Studies at University of Edinburgh
- Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute / Advisory Board member, UNWTO

15.35-15.55 **Wrap up by the European Commission and the Danish Presidency and Presentation of the upcoming Presidency of Cyprus**

Speakers:

- Andreea Staicu, Head of Tourism Sector, DG MOVE, The European Commission
- Christian Dons Christensen, Permanent Secretary of State of the Danish Ministry for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs
- Olga Theocharous Papageorgiou, Senior Tourism Officer, Tourism Observatory, Directorate of Financial Planning and Coordination, Deputy Ministry of Tourism, Cyprus

18.15-21.30 Informal dinner at Copenhagen Hospitality College
For bus pickup location and time, please see Know Before You Go

4 December

Time	Programme
10.00-13.00	Cultural tourism visit to Home of Carlsberg
	10.00-11.30: Introduction and tour of the exhibition
	11.30- 12.00: Sum-up and networking
	12.00-13.00: Possibility for a guided tour on the Carlsberg premises
	For bus pickup location and time, please see Know Before You Go

Master of Ceremonies



Signe Jungersted, CEO and Founding Partner, Group Nao

Signe leads the innovative and (impatient) forward-seeking NAO culture and approach. She is a constant cross-industry student of anything and all things curiously interesting. She is a focused professional, starting from insights and research, moving forward with strong strategic concepts that are sharply, playfully and noticeably communicated. She's a sought-after international keynote speaker on strategy, trends and destination development.

Keynote speakers



Morten Dahlin, Danish Minister for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs

Morten Dahlin is member of the Danish Parliament for The Liberal Party. Since 2023, he has been Danish Minister for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs, also responsible for tourism.



Apostolos Tzitzikostas, European Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

Apostolos Tzitzikostas is the Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism of the EU Commission. His task is to make European transport more competitive, sustainable and resistant to future shocks, and to ensure that it is safe, accessible and affordable for all EU citizens. He is also responsible for promoting a resilient and competitive tourism sector, in line with the EU Agenda for Tourism 2030.



Andreea Staicu, Head of Tourism Sector, DG MOVE, The European Commission

Andreea Staicu is Head of the Tourism Sector in the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport at the European Commission.



Lars Sandahl Sørensen, CEO, Danish Industries

Lars Sandahl Sørensen is an internationally experienced CEO and senior executive with substantial results in leading strategic growth and transformation in highly competitive environments and global industries. He has been CEO of Danish Industry (DI) since 2019, representing more than 20,000 Danish companies — both the large global Danish companies and a vast majority of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Many among them within the tourism industry.



Olivier Ponti, Director of Intelligence & Marketing, ForwardKeys

Olivier Ponti is responsible for bringing the company's unique travel insights into life. His considerable experience in tourism research, alongside a master's degree in Economics and Tourism Development, makes him one of Europe's leading experts in travel and destination marketing. He is also an eloquent proponent for the power of data in the tourism sector: when not delivering speeches on the topic at industry events, he is inspiring the next generation of travel-data enthusiasts at Sorbonne University, one of his alma maters.



Janette Roush, Senior Vice President of Innovation & Chief AI Officer, Brand USA

As Chief AI Officer and SVP of Innovation at Brand USA, Janette spearheads AI-driven strategies to enhance tourism marketing, streamline internal operations, and foster innovation for the benefit of both Brand USA and the broader U.S. travel industry. Prior to joining NYC Tourism and Brand USA, she spent more than two decades marketing Broadway at organizations such as

Broadway.com and AKA, a global leader in entertainment advertising and strategy.



Carolin Wehrhahn, Head of EU Public Affairs, Booking.com

Carolin Wehrhahn is an experienced public affairs strategist with a strong track record in EU policy making and advocacy for global technology and media companies. As Head of EU Public Affairs at Booking.com, she leads the company's Brussels Public Affairs office and team, steering its engagement with EU institutions on digital and travel-sector policy.

Speakers



Misa Labarile, Policy Officer Tourism, EU Commission

Misa Labarile, PhD is a policy officer of the European Commission working on the development of EU policy in the tourism sector (Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport). For the past four years, Misa has worked on developing policies to enhance the uptake of digitalisation in tourism and on smart tourism management. Being the host of the EU Smart Tourism podcast, she also manages the European Capital and Green Pioneer of Smart Tourism competition. She is now working on the new EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism, foreseen in 2026.



Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, TravelTech for Scotland / Future Studies, University of Edinburgh

Joshua Ryan-Saha is Director of Tourism, Travel and Festivals at the Edinburgh Futures Institute, University of Edinburgh. With the support of Scottish Enterprise he established TravelTech for Scotland to cement the position as a European leader in travel technology innovation, delivering £20m+ of inward investment. He serves on Scotland's Tourism and Hospitality Industry Leadership Group, advising on data, AI and technology transformation.



Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute / Advisory Board Member, UNWTO QUEST

Bernadett Papp is a senior researcher at the European Tourism Futures Institute, specializing in urban tourism development and its associated challenges. She is also a lecturer in the International Tourism, Leisure and Events Management master's program at NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences. Over the past years, Bernadett Papp has collaborated with various international organizations. She currently serves as a member of the UN Tourism QUEST Advisory Board.



Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD

As Head of the Tourism Unit, Jane Stacey is responsible for the work of the OECD Tourism Committee, and its Working Party on Tourism Statistics and the Global Forum on Tourism Statistics, Knowledge and Policies. The OECD work on tourism helps Member and Partner countries develop integrated policies to address major challenges faced by the sector, engage reforms in tourism building on in-depth policy analysis, improve measurement and analysis of tourism services, and enhance international co-operation in tourism, including through support for the G20, G7 and APEC tourism agendas.



Eric Bakermans, Director of Meetings & Conventions, NBTC

Eric Bakermans is the Director at the Meetings & Conventions department within the Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions. Eric Bakermans has and is holding several board positions within the (inter-) national community for marketing business events for a destination. Eric Bakermans has supported numerous national and international associations over the past years and plays a key role in the Dutch and international Destination Marketing Sector for business events.



Liselott Stenfeldt, Director of Research & Development, Gehl Architects

Liselott Stenfeldt is the Director of Research & Development, leading a multidisciplinary team addressing complex urban challenges through the lens of a human-centric technology. By harnessing the potential of digitalization, the team is exploring how new tools and methods can offer alternatives for how to plan cities in a way that is inclusive, equitable, and ethical. From leveraging deeper insights through layering data to involving new and wider parts of community groups in decision-making processes, the development is guided by a commitment to improving the quality of life for all urban residents.



Miguel Gallego, Head of Marketing & Communication, European Travel Commission

Miguel Gallego has over fifteen years of experience in destination marketing. He has held positions at various levels of tourism administration, ranging from city tourism boards to regional and national tourism organizations. Since 2012, he is Head of Marketing and Communication at the European Travel Commission. Miguel Gallego is also a lecturer in tourism and has contributed to several publications and research papers related to destination marketing and tourism development.



Tom Krackeler, Senior Vice President of Products, Mindtrip

Tom Krackeler's favorite mode of travel is by foot, whether it's exploring new cities or long-distance hiking on the Appalachian, Pacific Crest and Continental Divide Trails. Before joining the Mindtrip team, Tom Krackeler spent eight years at Zuora as Chief Customer Officer and SVP of Products. Prior to that, Tom Krackeler was Co-Founder/CEO at Frontleaf, a customer analytics startup, and Co-Founder and SVP of Products at Convio and GetActive Software, which pioneered online fundraising for charities.



Rikke Holm Petersen, Director of Marketing, Communication and Behaviour, Wonderful Copenhagen

Rikke Holm Petersen is director of Marketing, Communication & Behavior at Wonderful Copenhagen, the official tourism organization of Copenhagen. Her track record includes, among other achievements, the launch of CopenPay – a novel tourism concept that became the biggest high-season tourism news story globally last summer and has won several international prizes worldwide. Due to this innovative work, Wonderful Copenhagen has been named one of Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies 2025 in travel and hospitality.



Pedro Homar Oliver, Managing Director of Fundació Turisme Palma 365

Pedro Homar is the Managing Director of Fundació Turisme Palma 365, Palma de Mallorca's DMO, where he leads the city's strategy to position itself as a sustainable, culturally rich, and year-round urban destination. Since 2012, he has driven Palma's transition from a traditional sun-and-beach model to a diversified, quality-focused tourism offer. He has also advanced sustainability as a core pillar of the destination brand—promoting the dispersion of visitor flows, the protection of local life, and the development of cultural and inclusive tourism experiences.



Oleksandr Vesheleni, Head of Tourism Development and Digitalization, State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine

Oleksandr Vesheleni is a specialist in culture management, tourism development, and territorial branding and marketing, with extensive experience supporting creative industries and shaping municipal strategies. As Head of Tourism Development and Digitalisation at the State Agency for Tourism Development of Ukraine, he is currently focusing on how culture and tourism can strengthen community resilience and support long-term recovery in Ukraine.



Alexandros Vassilikos, HOTREC President

Alexandros Vassilikos is a second generation hotel owner, CEO of AIROTEL Group, which owns and manages a chain of six hotels in Athens, Patra and Kavala. Under his leadership, the Group recorded a significant hotel portfolio growth and diversified its operation by investing in real estate development. In 2021, he co-founded Capital H, a boutique hotel management company. Since 2019, he is an elected member of the Executive Committee of HOTREC. In 2022 after serving two terms, he is elected President of HOTREC, representing the hospitality sector in Europe and bringing together 47 national associations from 36 countries.



Christian Dons Christensen, Permanent Secretary of State of the Danish Ministry for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs

Christian Dons Christensen has since 2017 been the Permanent Secretary of State of the Danish Ministry for Urban, Rural and Ecclesiastical Affairs. He has previously served as Denmark's Ambassador to Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia.



Olga Theocharous Papageorgiou, Senior Tourism Officer, Deputy Ministry of Tourism, Cyprus

Olga Theocharous currently holds the position of the Senior Tourist Officer in the Directorate Financial Planning and Coordination of the Deputy Ministry of Tourism. She is the Head of the EU Affairs Department and the Tourism Observatory. Since 2010 she is a member of the National Tourism Strategy Committee. Since 2012, she is the designated Representative of the Deputy Ministry in the Tourism Committee of the Economic Adjustment Program for Cyprus having the responsibility for oversight the implementation of the tourism measures.



**Danish
Presidency**
Council of the
European Union

Organisers 24th European Tourism Forum



**Ministry of Urban, Rural
and Ecclesiastical Affairs**

Organising partners

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HOME OF
Carlsberg
COPENHAGEN

**HOTEL OG
RESTAURANT
SKOLEN**


FOOD ORGANISATION OF DENMARK