



Press release

Nova Gorica, 15th May 2023

Slovenian knowledge and innovation in the field of tourism and cultural heritage are part of the prestigious events of the European Union

In recent weeks, two high-level events took place at the EU level, one on April 18th in Stockholm as part of **Sweden's presidency of the Council of the European Union** dedicated to the digitalization of cultural heritage, and last Friday, May 5th, the **European Tourism Day**, which the European Commission organized in Brussels. At both events, Slovenian experts were recognized as leaders in the field of the use of advanced technologies.

EU with ambitious goals for the digitilization of cultural heritage

As part of Sweden's presidency of the Council of the European Union, the conference "Accelerating 3D in the Common European Data Space For Cultural Heritage: Why 3D Matters" was held in Stockholm on April 18th, organized by the Europeana Foundation. At the invitation of the organizers, **experts from the high-tech company Arctur from Nova Gorica, Dr Urška Starc Peceny and Matevž Straus** shared with high-ranking representatives of the EU member states an inspiring story about the visionary initiative of the Ministry of Economy, Tourism and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia, which included the digitalization of 100+ examples of immovable cultural heritage (national project Digital Innovation of Cultural Heritage - [DIKD](#)). This digital content has been used to create 30+ new tourism products that combine digital technologies, cultural heritage and tourism storytelling. Slovenia was the first to establish a national cultural heritage portal. Through an interactive workshop, the participants were guided through the entire 3D digitalization process, including field capture, editing, processing, 3D model generation, viewing, metadata preparation, and final use and reuse - including in the European Data Space for Tourism.



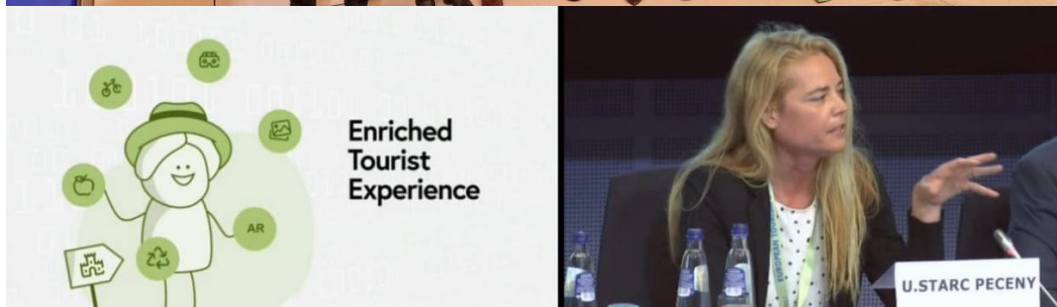
"The European Commission's strategic goal is to digitalize all threatened cultural heritage monuments and at least half of those with the highest number of visitors by 2030. Specific numbers are set for each country as goals (KPIs). Our Slovenian story serves as an inspiration for how to combine heritage preservation with the use of digital technologies for new content, be it in the field of tourism, education... up to the so-called metaverse," said **Matevž Straus**, head of the Heritage+ program within the Tourism 4.0 department at Arctur.



The European Union is building a single market for tourism data

On May 5th, the central event of the European Commission (EC) took place in Brussels, which hosted the most prestigious speakers on the topic of tourism. The opening speech was made by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, **Thierry Breton**. The goal of the European data strategy is to create a single market for data that will ensure European global competitiveness and data sovereignty. Common European Data Spaces will ensure that more data is available for use in the economy and society, while being controlled by the companies and individuals who create this data.

In the field of tourism, this is a leap into data-driven management of tourist destinations in the EU, with integrated support for data management and data exchange practices between destinations and regions and within the destination ecosystem, which will contribute to building a more sustainable, resilient and competitive tourism industry. This is precisely why the central round table was entitled "Digital transition: towards the data space for EU tourism", at which **Dr. Urška Starc Peceny, innovation officer and head of Tourism 4.0 at Arctur**, represented the companies' point of view. After the introduction, when the importance of the Data Governance Act, which supports the establishment and development of common European data spaces and the current state of designing a data space for tourism, was presented, she presented concrete projects from Mountaineering 4.0, experiences with the Tourism Impact Model, to those dedicated to digitalization of cultural heritage, pioneering the way in collecting and managing local data.



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"We must not allow data spaces to become frozen food chests, where there are beautiful graphs for which we pay global platforms and we do not know what data they were created with. Currently, most decisions are made on the basis of such beautiful graphs. We need to start collecting our data, our raw materials, with which we will cook the analyses that we ourselves want," she emphasized in front of 400 participants in Brussels and many online, and highlighted another key aspect of development: *"Data spaces will only come to life if they will be used by all stakeholders. Therefore, it is necessary to systematically measure the readiness of all stakeholders and help them wisely with training and financial support."* As part of the EU project Tourbit, co-financed in the COSME program, Arctur and its partners developed an innovative Digital Readiness Index tool, which is used by tourism companies throughout Europe for the purpose of assessing their digital readiness in different areas and functions of the company. Based on the answers, the tool automatically generates recommendations and enables an analysis of the maturity of companies at the beginning and after the end of the assistance they will receive. Arctur's technology has already been used for several such tools at the European level.

More information:

- Conference Accelerating 3D in the common European data space for cultural heritage: Why 3D matters: [video](#)
- European Tourism Day 2023: [video](#)