



# Sustainable rural tourism

7 May 2025

## Agenda

Timing	Agenda items
09.00 – 9.10	<b>Welcome and introduction to the day</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Outline of the event objectives and agenda</b> Patricia Martínez, Rural Pact Support Office</li> <li>&gt; <b>The LTVRA and sustainable rural tourism: building resilient and thriving communities</b> Haude Blanc, European Commission (DG AGRI)</li> </ul>
09.10 – 9.35	<b>Setting the scene: EU initiatives to support sustainable rural tourism</b> <p>EC representatives will present key EU policy frameworks and funding opportunities supporting sustainable rural tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andreea Staicu, European Commission (DG MOVE)</li> <li>• Anton Schrag, European Commission (DG REGIO)</li> </ul> <p>Questions &amp; Answers</p>
09.35 – 10.10	<b>Challenges and opportunities for tourism as a driver for rural development</b> <p>Stakeholder panel: Insights from EU networks on how tourism can drive sustainable rural development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Klaus Ehrlich, European Federation of Rural Tourism (<a href="#">RURALTOUR</a>)</li> <li>• Nancy Duxbury, <a href="#">University of Coimbra</a> (Portugal), <a href="#">IN SITU project</a></li> <li>• Piotr Michalowski, European Network of Cultural Centres (<a href="#">ENCC</a>)</li> <li>• Vincent Nijs, European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism (<a href="#">NECSTouR</a>)</li> </ul> <p>Questions &amp; Answers</p>
10.10 – 10.25	<b>Virtual coffee break</b>
10.25 – 11.05	<b>Learning from inspirational projects and practices</b> <p>Presentation of and exchanges with local examples that implement innovative approaches to sustainable rural tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <b>Sustainable rural tourism and heritage preservation in the Vidzeme region, at the Latvia–Estonia border</b> Eva Koljera, Vidzeme Tourism Association, Latvia</li> </ul>



- > **Lika Quality Label: integrating culture, gastronomy, and sustainability in the Lika Destination, Croatia**  
Petra Kovačević, Lika Destination, Croatia
- > **Food Zone: supporting rural entrepreneurship through regenerative tourism and green competences in Extremadura, Spain**  
María Márquez, Chamber of Commerce Cáceres, Spain

Questions & Answers

#### **11:05-11:15 Framing the debate: tourism and rural development – a policy perspective**

- > **Key results from the study of the Committee of the Regions and UN Tourism on Tourism and rural development**  
Radim Sršeň, European Committee of the Regions

**11.15-11.20**

#### **Transition to break-out rooms sessions**

#### **11.20 – 12.20 Sharing experiences and drawing lessons and recommendations**

Parallel break-out discussions on the following topics:

- Group 1: Innovation, economic development and diversification in rural tourism
- Group 2: Community participation, cultural heritage, and destination management
- Group 3: Climate-friendly, resilient, and sustainable rural tourism

**12.20– 12.30**

#### **Virtual coffee break**

#### **12.30 – 12.50 Reporting back from break-out sessions**

Report back from break-out sessions.

Stakeholder panel: main takeaways of the day and call for action:

- Klaus Ehrlich, European Federation of Rural Tourism ([RURALTOUR](#))
- Nancy Duxbury, [University of Coimbra](#) (Portugal), [IN SITU project](#)
- Piotr Michalowski, European Network of Cultural Centres ([ENCC](#))
- Vincent Nijs, European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism ([NECSTouR](#))

#### **12.50 – 13.00 Next steps and closing remarks**

- The Pascale Van Doren, Rural Pact Support Office
- Haude Blanc, European Commission (DG AGRI)



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