

2nd World Sports Tourism Congress: Tourism and Sports United for Sustainability

***Zadar, Croatia, 27 April 2023** - Sports tourism can play an increasingly important role in the economic diversification, growth and sustainable development of destinations worldwide.*

The 2nd edition of the World Sports Tourism Congress (WSTC), organized by UNWTO, Government of Croatia through its Ministry of Tourism and Sport, and the Affiliate Member Croatian National Tourist Board, brought together experts and leaders from across the sports and tourism sectors, alongside representatives of destinations and businesses. Held under the theme **"Tourism and Sports United for Sustainability"**, the Congress focused on key issues such as sports tourism's economic impact and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says: "Sports Tourism plays a key role in enhancing economic growth and social development in many destinations. It creates jobs and supports businesses in cities and rural communities alike. In order to maximize its potential, public and private sector actors must collaborate, and that's where UNWTO steps in."

Ms. Nikolina Brnjac, Minister of Tourism and Sport of Croatia said: "I am very proud of having hosted this Congress in Croatia. We enjoyed hearing many excellent international and Croatian speakers, as well as presenting the many opportunities of sustainable development of sports tourism in Croatia. Croatian government has secured generous funds for building active tourism infrastructure, in line with our goal of making Croatia a globally competitive sports tourism destination."

Delivering sports tourism's benefits

Alongside assessing the impacts of sports tourism, the Congress also explored the potential benefits of the growing sector, including its links to health and wellbeing, and its importance for promoting destinations to bigger and more diverse audiences. In Zadar, leaders from both established and emerging sports tourism destinations shared their insights and best practices to produce recommendations for growing the sector in size and influence.

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