



26-27 APRIL 2023, ZADAR, REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

# WORLD SPORTS TOURISM CONGRESS

- 2nd Edition -

"Tourism & Sports United for Sustainability"

## Concept Note



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Ministry of  
Tourism and Sport





## 1. Background

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**Sports tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors worldwide, both in size and market volume. In 2022, the sports tourism market was worth more than \$580 billion, while in 2023 it is expected to grow and reach more than \$680 billion.**

It is much more than watching a match or attending a sporting event. If well-managed it can be a key pillar of economic growth and social development, by supporting jobs and businesses in destinations as well as fostering the engagement of the local communities. Destinations around the world are increasingly looking to develop their attractiveness for sports tourism as a way to further diversify their tourism offer and build more competitive tourism sectors.

UNWTO and the Government of Croatia, through the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, seek to guide destinations in building their own sports tourism strategies and to bring together destinations and private stakeholders to discuss how to maximize the potential of sports tourism. **The Congress will represent an optimal framework for officials and experts from all over the world to share knowledge, innovative ideas, and best practices in this field and engage with high-level stakeholders in sports and tourism.**

## 2. Main Objectives of the WSTC

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To be organized under the theme “*Tourism and Sports United for Sustainability*”, the 2nd World Sports Tourism Congress will deepen the analysis of sports tourism as well as draw up insights and conclusions that may inspire and guide destinations. It will address key issues such as the sports tourism economic impact, its contribution to the SDGs from the environmental, social, and economic perspectives, key aspects to promote destinations through hosting sports events, and the connection between sports tourism and health, among others.

**More specifically, the WSTC aims to:**

- Assess the relationship between sports tourism and the three pillars associated with sustainability by showcasing successful examples of sustainable practices implemented by destinations and other tourism and sports stakeholders.
- Analyze the main trends with regard to sponsorships and commercialization in sports and key elements to maximize the potential of this growing field as new technologies come to the horizon.
- Examine the role of sports events as drivers for destinations’ marketing and promotion purposes, by gathering potential host destinations and sports rights holders of events.
- Showcase successful implementation strategies of destinations that have managed to excel in the art of hosting sports events.
- Analyze public-private governance models applied to sports tourism and highlight key aspects to achieve a higher and more successful level of cooperation between the two sectors as a driver towards developing a sports tourism destination.

### 3. Key Topics

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The WSTC will address, among others, the following main topics:

- Economic, Social, and Environmental Sustainability in Sports Tourism
- Changing trends and key elements to maximize sponsorships and commercialization opportunities in sports
- Sports events as marketing tools for destinations' branding and positioning
- Public-private governance models in Sports Tourism
- The role of innovation and digitalization to enhance the sports tourist experience
- Key success factors for destinations to become successful hosts of sports events
- The growing connection between sports tourism, health and wellbeing

### 4. Participants

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The 2nd World Sports Tourism Congress will bring together professionals in the areas of sports and tourism from Croatia and worldwide, including:

- Ministries of Tourism and Sports and high-level officials from UNWTO Member States
- UNWTO Affiliate Members
- National Tourism Organizations
- Regional and Local Destination Management Organizations
- International and National Sports Federations and Associations
- Sport industry organizations (events, leagues, competitions and sports clubs)
- Academic Institutions (universities, research institutes) in the area of tourism and sports
- Sports Academies and Training Camps

