



# NetMAR

Network for Medieval Arts & Rituals

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Press Release:

## **NetMAR 2nd Stakeholders Workshop: 'Cyprus Cultural Heritage as a Path to Sustainable Development'**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> NetMAR Stakeholder Workshop with the title 'Cyprus Cultural Heritage as a Path to Sustainable Development' took place on Wednesday 09 November 2022 at the Learning Resource Centre – Library 'Stelios Ioannou' of the University of Cyprus. The workshop brought together researchers with experts in tourism and cultural industry, policy makers, and key actors of local and governmental agencies who had the opportunity to exchange knowledge and ideas in an informal and friendly environment.

The workshop started with a welcoming address and short introduction by the NetMAR Project Coordinator and CeMAR Director Stavroula Constantinou. As Constantinou stressed, a key aim of NetMAR is to create and foster dialogue between academy and industry with a view to finding new exciting ways to mobilise the rich medieval heritage of Cyprus for social and economic benefit.

The workshop's keynote speaker was Ms Patricia Alberth, Director of the Bamberg World Heritage Office in Germany. In her presentation entitled 'Heritage Interpretation as a Management Tool in Tourism Destinations', Alberth shared her views on cultural heritage management and suggested key actions for using living heritage for sustainable development. Emphasising how early education is a crucial paragon for alerting communities to appreciate and understand heritage values, Alberth showcased the importance of a good heritage interpretation which can function as a means for promoting marketing and financial development, addressing new target groups, creating joint values, enhancing social cohesion, and boosting cultural pride and identity.

Alberth's talk was followed by a roundtable session moderated by Constantinou in which selected professionals from the culture and tourism sectors gave brief presentations. Dr Angelos Smagas, Famagusta District Religious Tours Programme Coordinator, shared his thoughts and ideas about finding alternative ways of exploiting the cultural assets that are detected in the Cape Greco National Forest Park. Elli Michael, Artistic Director of Windcraft Loud, presented the rationale and activities of the Windcraft Music Fest where tradition is creatively blended with contemporary art and music. Dr Evi Sotiriou, a Specialist in Tourism Planning and Sustainable Tourism Development, presented some of the key prospects and challenges entailed in investing in the Cyprus medieval cultural heritage. Nikolas Vryonis, Cultural Administrator of the Municipality of Ypsonas, spoke about the rich cultural heritage of Ypsonas and proposed new avenues for sustainable cultural tourism in Cyprus through the establishment of pilgrimage routes following Apostle Paul's footsteps. Panayiotis Theodorou, Facilitator and Project Manager of the Cultural Centre 'Politistiko Ergastiri Ayion Omoloyiton', spoke about the missing link that local NGOs need to create sustainable cultural activities through a structured and lasting collaboration with public and private institutions. Finally, Yiannis Miralis, Professor of Music and Saxophone and Vice President and Coordinator of International Relations at the European University of Cyprus, shared his

thoughts about the musical heritage of Cyprus and highlighted the need for integrating musical education within the public Cypriot universities.

A fruitful discussion followed. Through a lively exchange of thoughts and opinions, participants had the chance to further elaborate on experiences and best practices and to exchange ideas about possible collaborations.

This workshop constitutes the second in a series of three events which bring together academics and interested stakeholders to define targets, limitations, and prospects of collaboration.

For more information about these and other NetMAR activities, please visit [netmar.cy](http://netmar.cy).



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