



Università
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UNESCO
Chair in ICT
to develop
and promote
sustainable
tourism
at World
Heritage Sites



UNIVERSITY
OF WESTERN
MACEDONIA



Winter School 2026

**Taste the past.
Digital media for Byzantine heritage and authentic experiences in
Northern Greece**

Thessaloniki & Kastoria, Greece
7-14 February 2026



Church of Agioi Anargyroi, 10th century Kastoria Greece
Photo Credit: Eviana Gerousi (2025)

DAY 1 - Saturday 7th February 2026			
Time	Activity	People involved	Place
Within 19:00	Arrival in Thessaloniki		Hotel Luxembourg https://www.hotelluxembourg.gr
1930-2130	Welcome, dinner and self-presentation of participants	All Participants	Boukia boukia
DAY 2 - Sunday 8th February 2026 Byzantine Heritage and Legacy			
0730-0830	Breakfast		Hotel Luxembourg
0930-1100	Walk from the hotel to the White Tower		White Tower
1130-1245	Guided Field Visit & Presentation: A "Coptic" textile in the Museum of Byzantine Culture	Dr. Anastasios Sinakos Archaeologist at BMC	Byzantine Museum of Culture
1330-1430	Lunch		Derlikatessen
1600-1730	USI Group Project Presentations	Dr. Silvia Ascaniis and USI Participants	Hotel Luxembourg Conference Hall
1730-1915	Free time		
1915-1945	A Case study: Hotel Luxembourg	Mr. Giorgos Spanos Manager of Hotel Luxembourg	Hotel Luxembourg Conference Hall
2000-2130	Dinner		Salumeria Del Greco
2130-2200	The past and present of a traditional restaurant	Mr. Manolis Charalabidis Owner of Salumeria Dal Greco	
Day 3 - Monday 9th February 2026 UNESCO World Heritage Sites & Intangible Culture			
0730-0830	Breakfast and check-out		Hotel Luxembourg
0900-1030	Guided Field Visit & Presentation: The Rotunda, the monument's management until recently Presentation: The Rotunda, the monument's archaeological significance	Mrs. Stavroula Tzevreni Archeologist of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Thessaloniki City. Mrs. Pelli Mastora Archeologist the Ephorate of Antiquities of Thessaloniki City.	Arch of Galerius and Rotunda UNESCO WHS
1030-1200	Guided Field Visits	Mr. Romilos Mantzouras Historian, Tourist Guide	Church of Saint Sophia UNESCO WHS Church of Saint Demetrius and Crypt UNESCO WHS
1230-1330	Lunch		Serraikon
1400-1700	Bus from Thessaloniki to Kastoria		Orologopoulos Mansion https://www.oroologopoulos.gr/ & Hotel Bakaris https://www.hotelbakaris.gr/en/
1730-1930	USI Group Projects		Hotel Lobby Orologopoulos
2000-2200	Dinner		Kalderimi
DAY 4 - Tuesday 10th February 2026 Opening Ceremony Authentic Heritage Experiences			
0730-0830	Breakfast		Hotel
1000-1130	Opening Ceremony	Prof. Filareti Kotsi Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates Prof. Lorenzo Cantoni UNESCO Chair, USI Lugano, Switzerland	Vergoula Mansion
	Welcoming Speeches	Mr. Ioannis Korentsidis Mayor of Kastoria Co-organiser & Host	

		Mrs. Maria Antoniou Member of Parliament	
		Bishop Kallinikos Metropolitan Bishop of Kastoria	
		Mr. Dimitris Savvopoulos Deputy Regional Governor of Kastoria	
		Prof. Aspasia Vlachvei Prof. Theodoros Monovasilis Department of Economics University of Western Macedonia	
		Mr. Theofilaktos Zibidis President of Tourism Association	
		Mrs. Andromachi Skreka Director Ephorate of Antiquites	
		Mr. Charalambos Karataglidis President of the Chamber of Commerce of Kastoria	
		Mr. Apostolos Tsoukas President of Kastorian Fur Association	
1130-1300	Coffee Break Pop-up Private View Exhibition Opening “ANAMEΣA”	Ms. Eviana Gerousi, Artist	
1300-1500	Boat Tour and Traditional Kastorian Lunch	All participants	Kastoria Lake
1530-1600	Gastronomy and Wellbeing: Rediscovering Balance through Food and Travel	Mrs. Maria Athanasopoulou Founder and CEO Respond on Demand, Chair Emeritus, World Food Travel Association Mrs. Chrissa Krassa CEO Respond on Demand Mr. Tryfonas Kioutoutskas R&D Coordinator	Vergoula Mansion
1600-1615	Tourism in Western Macedonia: Empirical Evidence	Prof. Aspasia Vlachvei Department of Economics University of Western Macedonia	
1615-1630	The Hotel Sector of Kastoria. Investment, Positioning and Strategic Development	Mr. Sideris Smaropoulos Vice-President of Hotels Association of Kastoria	
1630-1645	Women Entrepreneurship and Tourism	Mrs. Konstantina Tongaridou Head of Network at Women Entrepreneurship	
1645-1730	Coffee Break & Networking		
1730-2000	USI Group Projects		Vergoula Mansion
2000-2200	Dinner		Pizza
DAY 5 - Wednesday 11th February 2026 Digital Media and AI for Cultural Heritage			
0730-0830	Breakfast		Hotel
900-1130	Guided Field Visit		Byzantine Museum Two Byzantine Churches Agioi Anargiroi & Ag. Stefanos
1200-1400	Cooking Class: Kastorian Pie Lunch		Paradosiakon
1430-1530	An Introduction to Digital Media, Heritage Tourism and Cultural Sustainability	Prof. Lorenzo Cantoni USI Lugano, Switzerland	Vergoula Mansion

1530-1615	AI for Cultural Heritage	Dr. Silvia de Ascaniis USI Lugano, Switzerland	
1615-1700	Coffee Break		
1700-1800	Research Workshop	WS Students	
1700-1900	USI Group Projects		
2000-2200	Dinner		Old Town
DAY 6 - Thursday 12th February 2026 Natural & Cultural Heritage			
0730-0830	Breakfast		Hotel
0900-1200	Hike around the lake		Dragon's Cave Monastery of Panagia Mavriotissa
1230-1400	Lunch		Vorinon
1400-1430	Guided Field Visits (by Bus)		Tsiatsiapas Mansion
1430-1530			Neolithic Settlement of Dispilio https://limneosoikismos.gr/
1530-1700			Maggel Winery
1700-1730	Coffee Break		Vergoula Mansion
1700-1900	USI Group projects		
1900-...	Free evening		
DAY 7 - Friday 13th February 2026 Closing Ceremony and Awards Tourism in Rural Destinations			
0730-0830	Breakfast		Hotel
0900-1000	Guided Field Visit		Costume Museum
1000-1130	Guided Field Visit (optional) (by Bus)	Mr Christos Papadopoulos and Mrs Maria Papadopoulou	Fur workshop PKZ Furs https://www.pkzfurs.com/
1300-1400	Lunch		Idaies
1400-1600	USI Group Projects		Vergoula Mansion
1630-1645	Kastoria from Cultural Heritage to Digital Experience	Ms. Marianna Lovatsi University of Macedonia, Greece	Vergoula Mansion
1645-1700	The Monasteries of Meteora. A UNESCO World Cultural Monument	Mrs. Vassiliki Rapti Experimental Higher Vocational Training School of Tourism in Macedonia	
1700-1730	Coffee break		
1730-1900	USI Projects Presentation to tourism stakeholders and authorities		
1900-2000	Closing Ceremony and Certificates Awarding		
	Traditional Kastorian Dance and Reception	Cultural Club Athanasios Christopoulos	
DAY 8 - Saturday 14th February 2026			
	Breakfast		
	Departure to Thessaloniki	Everyone independently	International flights



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Culture
Ephorate of Antiquities of Kastoria



ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ
MUSEUM OF BYZANTINE CULTURE

