



MEDIA RELEASE

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EHTTA Honored with UN Tourism Recognition for Innovative Knowledge and Product Development

[Spa, 07/11/2025] — The European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA) is proud to announce that it has been selected for a distinguished **recognition by the UN Tourism Affiliate Members Department** for Innovative Knowledge and Product Development.

On the occasion of the Plenary Session of UN Tourism Affiliate Members held in the context of the General Assembly of UN Tourism in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) from 7-11 November, EHTTA representative and Executive Director Simone Zagrodnik received the recognition during a recognition ceremony from the Director of Affiliate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department Ion Vilcu.

“This recognition reflects the remarkable outcomes achieved through EHTTA’s efforts in advancing Thermal Tourism. Thanks to your continued commitment, together we have successfully organized the International Congress on Thermal Tourism with the support of UN Tourism in Ourense (2022), Nancy (2023), and Budapest (2025). These events have seen an increasing participation of Affiliate Members and destinations, expanding interest in thermal tourism and contributing to enhanced visibility and engagement of this important thematic area within the network of Affiliate Members,” Vilcu stated.

The next International Congress on Thermal Tourism is aimed to take place in 2027 following the very successful gathering of this year with more than 140 participants from 30 countries around the globe. Currently working on the question who the host will be, EHTTA aims at announcing the location soon.

EHTTA President Riccardo Mortandello expressed the association’s gratitude by saying “EHTTA extends its heartfelt thanks to the UN Tourism Affiliate Members Department for this prestigious recognition, their continued support and encouragement for bringing thermal tourism on the global agenda. We are very much looking forward to continuing this great collaboration in the years ahead. Over the past two years, EHTTA has strengthened its connections with Affiliate Members worldwide, greatly enriching its knowledge and understanding of global best practices in thermal tourism.”

In the light of this development EHTTA is currently working on the framework for a **new UN Tourism publication on Thermal Tourism** with the support and collaboration of UN Tourism Affiliate Members. This initiative aims at bringing thermal tourism to a more global recognition and supporting the work of public and private stakeholders in this special segment by framing the state of knowledge and research by showcasing best practices.

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[HistoricThermalTowns](https://www.youtube.com/HistoricThermalTowns)



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[European-Historic-Thermal-Towns-Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/European-Historic-Thermal-Towns-Association)

#CulturalRoutes

#ThermalTravels

#HistoricThermalTowns

Notes for Editors

1. EHTTA is a membership organisation representing 51 members in 19 countries and two international partners in the USA and Brazil. It was founded in 2009 with six Founding Members: Acqui Terme (Italy), Bath (UK), Ourense (Spain), Salsomaggiore Terme (Italy), Spa (Belgium) and Vichy (France). It is an international non-profit association registered in Spa (Belgium).
2. EHTTA was certified as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 2010 and is one of 49 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe which provide a wealth of leisure and educational activities for all citizens across Europe and beyond and are key resources for responsible tourism and sustainable development. The certification "[Cultural Route of the Council of Europe](#)" is a guarantee of excellence.
3. Since 2019 EHTTA has been an Affiliate Member of UN Tourism, signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Thermal Tourism with the global organisation in 2022.
4. With participation of UN Tourism EHTTA organized the [International Congress on Thermal Tourism](#) in 2022 in Ourense (Spain), 2023 in Nancy (France) and 2025 in Budapest (Hungary).
5. In September 2022, EHTTA signed the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Change in Tourism.
6. EHTTA is Advisory Partner in charge of communications in the [Interreg Europe project "GreenSPAS – Improving public policies of spa towns and regions facing climate change in Europe"](#) (2024-2028) lead by its member La Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central (France).