

The 20th National 4th International Tourism Congress - Eskisehir, Turkey

Hosted by Anadolu University's Faculty of Tourism, the 20th National 4th International Tourism Congress was held in Anemon Hotel, Eskisehir between October 16th and 19th, 2019. The fact that Eskisehir has recently gathered momentum in city tourism contributed to the determination of the main theme, and 'city tourism' was selected as the main theme of the congress. It was observed that plenty of participants from both international and national arenas were in congress in which several subjects such as economy, marketing and planning of city tourism, smart cities, social life in cities, tour planning and management were addressed. Including PhD colloquium, trip to Sivrihisar, exhibitions of crafts and tourism comics along with presentations and panels, the congresses had an interactive and rich program. 'The PhD Colloquium' has been held with the presentations of 5 PhD students for the second time on October 16th, 2019 which was the second day of the Congress, after the first one held in the 19th National Tourism Congress. It is quite significant to have the colloquium in the congress which enables academicians and students to discuss thesis researches and to guide participants.

Bringing sector representatives, prevalent Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and tourism academicians together, the 20th National 4th International Tourism Congress was opened on October 17th, 2019 by the speeches of Professor Dr. Safak Ertan COMAKLI, the Rector of Anadolu University; Levent KIRCAN, the Deputy Directorate-General of Investments and Enterprises, The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism; Bekir Sahin TUTUNCU and Akın AGCA, the deputy governors of Eskisehir Province; Professor Dr. Oktay EMIR, the Dean of the Tourism Faculty, Anadolu University and the Chairman of the Executive Board; Professor Dr. Salih KUSLUVAN, the Congress Term President; Ali BILIR, member of TURSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies). The opening speeches addressed promotion strategies and objectives of Turkish tourism, the importance of digitalization in tourism, improvement of city tourism in Eskisehir and smart tourism applications. Upon the opening speeches, the program continued with "City Tourism Panel". In the panel, whose moderator was Salih KUSLUVAN, Muzaffer UYSAL, Metin KOZAK, Fahri KARAKAYA and Mehmet Salim KADIBESEGIL were the panelists. In the panel, city tourism from past to future, the adaptation of blockchain technology to tourism, sophistication, sustainability of city tourism, being at international platforms, branding

and overtourism were addressed. The second panel was held with the additional participation of the panelists named, Tamara RATZ and Sung Hee (Ally) PARK on October 18th, 2019, the third day of the congress by referring to case studies and icons. Holding both national and international dimensions at the same time has contributed to panel speeches in which experts and experienced participants had discussions within the framework of main themes of the congresses. It was observed that participants' interests in congress themes were intensive. There were 158 presentations in 10 different sessions in Turkish, and 76 presentations in 8 different sessions in English. The total participant number was 392 and full-text proceedings were published in 4 volumes.

Upon sessions, a half-day tour to Sivrihisar, a district of Eskisehir, was organized on October 19th, 2019. Participants' interest in the tour including Metin Yurdanur Open Air Museum, Clock Tower, Surp Yerortutyun Armenian Church, Traditional Sivrihisar House, Sivrihisar Great Mosque, which is in the UNESCO Tentative List, and Alemsah Tomb was intensive. All activities of the congress were successfully completed at the end of the tour day.

In brief, the 20th National 4th International Tourism Congress was held in order to gain international quality and to contribute to turning it from tradition to future. As a result, this aroused more interest in tourism and encouraged participation. It is significant that these congresses can bring academicians and practitioners together; are organized within the 2023 Tourism Strategy; reflect characteristics of the cities which are the host city for them; and their main themes are actual and practical. Besides, it is possible to mention that PhD colloquium in future congresses will guide young researchers in their studies. And this will enrich the sector. The 21st National 5th International Congress will be held by Balıkesir University's Faculty of Tourism between October 15th and 17th, 2020. Main theme of the forthcoming congress will be "Domestic Tourism".

Figen Sevinc

Bartın University, Bartın Vocational School
Department of Tourism, Travel and Recreational Services
fsevinc@bartin.edu.tr