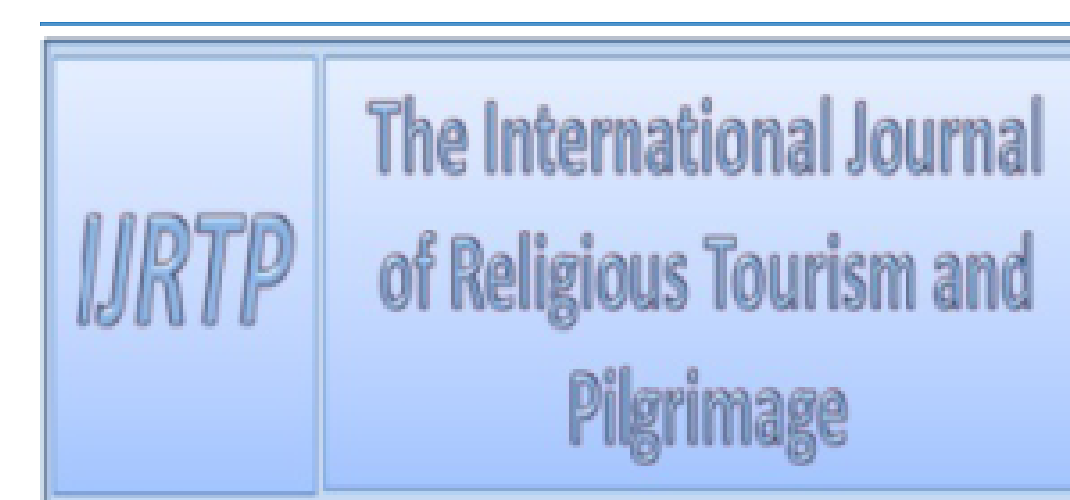
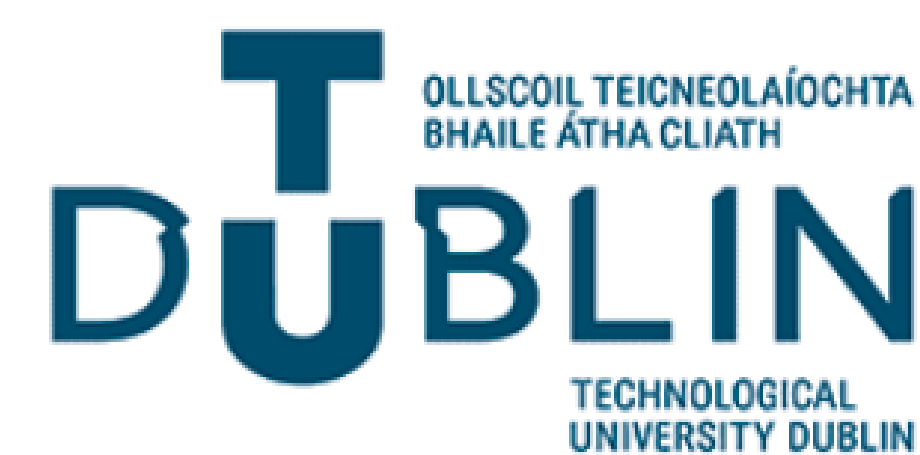




18th Annual International Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage (IRTP) Conference

23rd - 26th
June 2027

University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica,
Portorož, Slovenia



ANNOUNCEMENT



The **International Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Conference** (IRTP), organised by the Institute for Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage (IRTP) in conjunction with the *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* (IJRTP) and hosted by the **University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica**, invites abstracts for its **18th** Annual International Conference, to be held from **23rd–26th June 2027** in Portorož, Slovenia. Portorož lies in Slovenian Istria, at the meeting point of the Alps, the Mediterranean, Central Europe and the Balkans – a small territory in which Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, Habsburg, Slavic and Yugoslav layers of religious life have been continuously negotiated. Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim heritages meet here within a radius of a few dozen kilometres, and three national borders (Slovenia, Italy, Croatia) are within an hour of the conference venue.

The 2027 host region therefore offers a living laboratory for the study of pilgrimage across borders, faiths and languages, from the Marian sanctuary of Strunjan and the medieval churches of Piran to the UNESCO-inscribed Škofja Loka Passion Play.

The aim of the conference is to provide both empirical and personal insights into the changing nature of religion in society and to further the debate for both policy-makers and academics to consider these evolving challenges within the future development of faith tourism and pilgrimage. The main emphasis for acceptance at this event is based on participants presenting papers, which apply to the main themes of the conference.



ORGANISATION

HOSTED BY:

University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica
<https://www.turistica.si/en>

Please check the conference website for further information, www.irtp.co.uk

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CONFERENCE THEMES

The key themes of the conference include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 📍 Artificial Intelligence Capabilities and Pilgrims Experience
- 📍 Crowd Control and Crowd Dynamics for Religious Sites
- 📍 Critical Perspectives on Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage
- 📍 Environmental Impacts on Religious Sites
- 📍 Faith and Gastronomy in Religious Tourism
- 📍 Gastronomy in Religious Tourism
- 📍 Globalization / Impacts at Religious Sites
- 📍 Islands Association with Spiritual Healing and Wellness Practices
- 📍 Legal, Security and Safety issues for Pilgrims
- 📍 Pilgrimage and Religious Tourism Motivations
- 📍 Managing and Promoting Religious Sites
- 📍 Media and Cultural Challenges for Pilgrimage
- 📍 Mobilities, Pilgrimage, and Tourism

- Physical Environment and Sacred Tourist Destinations
- Pilgrimage, Spirituality, Religion and Tourism
- Pilgrimage and Spiritual Journeys
- Political Challenges Facing Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage
- Overtourism at Religious Sites
- Religious Commemoration and Remembrance
- Religious Cultural Heritage
- Religious Tourism and Political Economy
- Risks and Conflicts of / at Sacred Sites
- Role of Ritual in Sacred Journeys
- Spiritual Reflection and Cemeteries
- Secular v Ritual Tourism
- Social Media and Information Technology for Pilgrimage
- Sustainability in Pilgrimage and Religious Tourism
- Sustainable Practices for Religious Tourism
- Terrorism, Migration and Religious Tourism
- Theory, Philosophy and Theology of Religious Tourism



SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- Vitor Ambrósio, Higher Institute for Hotel and Tourism Studies, Portugal
- Honey Libertine Achanzar-Labor, University of the Philippines Manila
- Silvia Aulet University of Girona, Spain
- Yasin Bilim, Necmettin Erbakan University, Turkey
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- Md Javed Kawsar, University of Salford, UK
- Dorothy Lane, Luther College, Regina, Canada
- Maximiliano Korstanje, Universidad de Palermo, Argentina
- Isilda Leitao, University Nova de Lisboa, Portugal



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- ⦿ Maria Leppakari, Archipelago City of Pargas
 - ⦿ Miha Lesjak, University of Primorska, Slovenia
 - ⦿ Lucrezia Lopez, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain
 - ⦿ Darius Liutikas, Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences, Lithuania
 - ⦿ Syamsu Madian, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia
 - ⦿ Maja Uran Maravić, University of Primorska, Slovenia
 - ⦿ Ian McIntosh, IUPUI Honors College, USA
 - ⦿ Polyxeni Moira, University of West Attica, Greece
 - ⦿ Dane Munro, University of Malta
 - ⦿ Dimitrios Mylonopoulos, University of West Attica, Greece
 - ⦿ Jerome Ong, University of the Philippines, Manila
 - ⦿ Daniel H. Olsen, Brigham Young University, USA
 - ⦿ Danijel Pavlović, Academy of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness, Belgrade, Serbia
 - ⦿ Elisa Piva, Università del Piemonte Orientale, Italy
 - ⦿ Lluís Prats, University of Girona, Spain

- ⦿ Giovanni Ruggieri, OTIE and University of Palermo, Sicily, Italy
- ⦿ Razaq Raj, Leeds Beckett University, UK
- ⦿ Tamara Ratz, Kodolányi János University, Hungary
- ⦿ Rossana Salerno, University of Palermo, Italy
- ⦿ Carlos Santos, Center of Applied Economics Studies of the Atlantic, Portugal
- ⦿ Kiran Shinde, La Trobe University
- ⦿ Xose Manuel Santos Solla, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain
- ⦿ Anna Trono, University of Salento, Italy
- ⦿ Dolors Vidal, University of Girona, Spain
- ⦿ Shin Yasuda, Teikyo University, Japan
- ⦿ Petra Zabukovec Baruca, University of Primorska, Slovenia
- ⦿ Vincent Zammit, Malta





KEYNOTE **SPEAKERS**



Keynote addresses will be delivered by leading scholars and practitioners in religious tourism, pilgrimage studies and heritage management. Names and titles will be announced on the conference website before the abstract deadline.

IMPORTANT DATES



Abstract submissions:	15th February 2027
Notification of Abstract Acceptance:	28th February 2027
Conference Registration Deadline and submission of extended abstract:	15th May 2027
Full Paper Submission:	15th September 2027





FEEES



There is no presentation fee for those who are selected to deliver papers. Costs are kept to a minimum, and the conference fee will be **€275.00**. The fee includes the conference pack and abstract book, refreshments and lunches on the conference days, the welcome reception and the Gala Dinner.

The excursion takes place on 26 June 2027 and must be booked and paid for separately. **€50 per person.**

For all payment details, please see: www.irtp.co.uk

PUBLICATIONS

The conference organisers have an impressive track record of successfully publishing papers from their events. Following review, suitable papers that are submitted according to the deadline will be published in the International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage (IJRTP) and/or selected for inclusion as chapters in forthcoming books in the organisers' Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Book Series with CABI publishers.

Conference Abstracts (extended abstracts) will be available online at <https://arrow.dit.ie/irtp>

CONFERENCE LOCATION

THE VENUE: UNIVERSITY OF PRIMORSKA, FACULTY OF TOURISM STUDIES – TURISTICA, PORTOROŽ

University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica, Obala 11a, SI-6320 Portorož, Slovenia · www.turistica.si/en

Turistica is Slovenia's first and leading higher-education and research institution dedicated entirely to tourism. Founded in 1995 as the College of Tourism Portorož, it became a founding member faculty of the University of Primorska in 2003. The faculty offers undergraduate, master's and doctoral programmes in tourism, and its Department of Cultural Tourism has a long record of research in heritage, pilgrimage, sacred sites and the systems modelling of cultural tourism destinations. Turistica is embedded in European and global academic networks (Erasmus+, UNESCO UNITWIN, ATLAS, TTRA Europe) and regularly hosts international scientific conferences.

The faculty stands directly on the Portorož seafront, a few minutes' walk from the main hotels, the bus station and the beach. Sessions will be held in the faculty's lecture theatres and seminar rooms, all equipped for presentations and hybrid participation, with catering and social events on site and in the immediate surroundings. The whole conference – venue, hotels, restaurants and evening programme – is walkable, which leaves more time for discussion and for the region itself.

ABOUT PORTOROŽ, PIRAN AND SLOVENIAN ISTRIA

Portorož – the *Port of Roses* – takes its name from the medieval church of St Mary of the Rosary, once part of the Benedictine monastery of St Lawrence. From the 1890s it developed into one of the most fashionable seaside and health resorts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; the belle-époque Palace Hotel of 1910 still dominates the bay. Its therapeutic tradition rests on the brine and mud of the neighbouring salt pans, worked continuously since the thirteenth century.

Four kilometres along the coast lies **Piran**, one of the best-preserved medieval towns on the Adriatic: a Venetian-Gothic ensemble of narrow lanes rising to the parish church of St George, with the Minorite monastery and church of St Francis, the town walls, and Tartini Square, named after the composer Giuseppe Tartini, born here in 1692. Six kilometres in the other direction is the Marian sanctuary of **Strunjan**, a place of pilgrimage since the apparition of 1512 and still one of the most visited Marian shrines in the Slovenian littoral. The **Sečovelje Salina Nature Park** preserves a working cultural landscape where salt is still harvested by hand using seven-hundred-year-old methods, together with the rituals, feast days and material culture that surround it.

The wider region is exceptionally rich for scholars of religious tourism and pilgrimage: the cathedral and old town of Koper; the church of the Holy Trinity at Hrastovlje with its celebrated *Dance of Death* fresco of 1490; the Slovenian branches of the Camino de Santiago; the Marian shrines of Sveta Gora above Nova Gorica and Brezje; the pilgrimage island of Bled; and, some two hours away, Škofja Loka, whose Passion Play was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016. Trieste (Italy), with its Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish and Protestant heritage, is an hour away by road, and Croatian Istria begins twenty minutes to the south.



Practical notes: Slovenia is a member of the European Union, the Schengen Area and the euro area; the currency is the euro (€). The official language is Slovene, but English, Italian and Croatian are widely spoken in the coastal region, which is officially bilingual (Slovene Italian). Late June is warm and Mediterranean, with daytime temperatures typically between 25 °C and 30 °C; light clothing, sun protection and comfortable walking shoes are recommended, together with modest dress for visits to churches and monasteries. The European emergency number is 112, tap water is drinkable, electricity is 230 V (type C/F plugs), and the time zone is CEST (UTC+2). Delegates requiring a visa should contact the Conference Secretariat in good time for an official letter of invitation.

TRAVEL INFORMATION: HOW TO REACH PORTOROŽ

Portorož is well connected to seven international airports within a two-and-a-half-hour drive. There is no direct rail link to Portorož itself, so most delegates arrive by airport shuttle, bus or car.

From Airports in Tokyo to Takasaki City

- 📍 **Trieste – Ronchi dei Legionari (TRS), Italy** – approx. 65 km, 1 h by road (the closest airport)
- 📍 **Ljubljana Jože Pučnik (LJU), Slovenia** – approx. 130 km, 1 h 30–1 h 45 by road (the national airport)
- 📍 **Venice Marco Polo (VCE), Italy** – approx. 185 km, 2 h 15 by road
- 📍 **Treviso (TSF), Italy** – approx. 200 km, 2 h 20 by road (low-cost carriers)
- 📍 **Pula (PUY), Croatia** – approx. 95 km, 1 h 30 by road

- 📍 **Zagreb Franjo Tuđman (ZAG), Croatia** – approx. 230 km, 2 h 45 by road
- 📍 **Klagenfurt (KLU), Austria** – approx. 200 km, 2 h 20 by road

Portorož also has its own small airport (POW) at Sečovlje, 6 km from the venue, used for general aviation and seasonal charter flights only.

Distances and journey times are indicative and should be checked when booking.

Recommended: GoOpti airport shuttle

The organisers recommend GoOpti, a Slovenian shared-ride transfer operator that connects all of the airports listed above directly with Portorož and Piran, door to door – from the terminal to your hotel. Booking is made online in advance:

www.goopti.com

Shared transfers are the economical option: you travel with other passengers on a flexible time window. **Standard** transfers offer a fixed pick-up time, and **VIP** transfers are private, door-to-door and for your party only.

- 📍 **Prices fall the earlier you book** – GoOpti fares rise as departure approaches, so reserve your transfer as soon as your flights are ticketed.
- 📍 The service operates 24 hours a day and monitors flight arrivals, which makes it the safest choice for early-morning or late-night flights, when public transport to the coast does not run.



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- ⦿ Booking requires your flight number, arrival time and the exact address of your accommodation in Portorož or Piran. You can book return transfers at the same time.
 - ⦿ Delegates arriving together are encouraged to coordinate and share a VIP vehicle, which is often cheaper per person than individual seats.

By car

Portorož is reached from Ljubljana on the A1 motorway and the H5/H6 expressway (approx. 1 h 30), from Trieste on the E751/H5 (approx. 1 h), and from Croatian Istria via the Dragonja or Sečovlje border crossings. A **vignette (e-vinjeta)** is mandatory for Slovenian motorways and can be purchased online before travel at evinjeta.dars.si; Italian and Croatian motorways use conventional tolls. Note that Piran's historic centre is closed to traffic – visitors park at the Fornače car park and take the free shuttle bus. Parking in Portorož is chargeable; most hotels have garages.

By bus

Portorož bus station is a five-minute walk from the Faculty. Direct coaches run from Ljubljana (approx. 2 h 30), Koper (approx. 40 min), Trieste (approx. 1 h 30) and, seasonally, from Croatian Istrian towns; operators include Arriva and FlixBus. Timetables for the whole Slovenian network are searchable at www.ap-ljubljana.si and www.arriva.si. Local line 1/2 links Piran, Portorož and Lucija every 15–20 minutes.

By train

There is no railway station in Portorož. The nearest station is **Koper**, approx. 20 km away, with connections via Divača to Ljubljana and onwards to Vienna, Munich, Zagreb, Budapest and Venice. From Koper, buses to Portorož run frequently and take about 40 minutes; a taxi takes about 25 minutes. Timetables: www.slo-zeleznice.si.

By sea

In the summer season, catamaran services usually link Piran with Trieste and, on some routes, with Venice, which is a memorable way to arrive. Sailings are seasonal, and operators change from year to year, so schedules should be confirmed close to the date. Portorož and Piran also have marinas for delegates arriving by private boat.

Getting around during the conference

Everything you need is within walking distance: the faculty, the hotels, the beach promenade and the restaurants of Portorož, with Piran a 45-minute seafront walk or a short bus ride away. Local buses, taxis and a seasonal tourist train connect Portorož, Piran, Lucija and Strunjan. Field trips will depart by coach from in front of the faculty.

Indicative field trips and social programme

The academic programme will be complemented by visits designed for scholars of religious tourism and pilgrimage. The following are indicative and will be confirmed on the conference website:

- 📍 Guided walk through Piran: the parish church of St George, the Minorite monastery and church of St Francis, and the medieval town walls
- 📍 The Marian sanctuary of Strunjan and the Strunjan Landscape Park
- 📍 Sečovlje Salina Nature Park: salt-making as living heritage, ritual and identity
- 📍 The church of the Holy Trinity at Hrastovlje and its Dance of Death fresco, with the old town and cathedral of Koper
- 📍 Istrian olive oil, wine and gastronomy tasting, and the conference Gala Dinner in a heritage setting

ACCOMMODATION

Portorož offers a full range of accommodation within walking distance of the venue, from historic five-star hotels and thermal spa resorts to family guest houses, apartments and hostels; Piran adds boutique hotels in its medieval core. Preferential rates have been negotiated in a number of properties in Portorož and Piran, all within walking distance or a short bus ride of the venue. Destination information: www.portoroz.si and www.slovenia.info.

Please note that Portorož is a resort destination and late June is high season on the Slovenian coast. Delegates are strongly advised to book as early as possible, as rooms in Portorož and Piran sell out well in advance. Please also note the following:

- ⦿ Rooms under the conference code are held only until the release date; after that, availability and rates are subject to change.
- ⦿ Minimum-stay requirements may apply in high season, and cancellation conditions are stricter than in low season. Please check the conditions carefully before confirming.
- ⦿ The tourist tax and registration fee are charged separately and are not included in the quoted room rate.
- ⦿ Delegates wishing to extend their stay before or after the conference should request the additional nights at the time of booking, as later extensions may not be possible.
- ⦿ Parking is limited and chargeable throughout the area, and the historic centre of Piran is closed to traffic. Delegates arriving by car should confirm parking arrangements with their hotel in advance.
- ⦿ Should the listed hotels be fully booked, further accommodation is available in Lucija, Strunjan and Izola, all within a short bus or taxi ride of the venue.

Delegates may reserve their accommodation directly through the EH/Eurotas central reservations office at **booking@eh.si** or +386 8 201 04 20. When booking, please quote the conference code **IRTP**. The code is valid when booking on the relevant hotel's own website, through the Eurotas booking system (link below), or through the central reservations office. Conference rates and booking conditions will be confirmed in due course.

Participating hotels:

- 📍 Boutique Hotel Portorose, Portorož — <https://eh.si/en/hotel-portorose/>
- 📍 Hotel Piran, Piran — <https://eh.si/en/hotel-piran/>
- 📍 Barbara Piran Beach Hotel, Fiesa, Piran — <https://eh.si/en/hotel-barbara/>

Booking system:

https://eurotashoteli.book-official-website.com/book.php?company_id=81037dda7b9247343b41d0c542045e1b&hotel=6377907247bcc84de6809b95a6693ab0&date=2027-06-22&partners_access=IRTP



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DETAILS

FORMAT OF ABSTRACTS

Please provide the following information in your Abstract:

- ⦿ A clear and precise **title** for your paper.
- ⦿ The **name(s)**, institutional **affiliation**, and **email** address for **all** contributing authors.
- ⦿ A list of **five keywords** that describe the research.
- ⦿ A concise abstract – **max. 300 words** – in good English, which provides an overview of your proposed paper.
- ⦿ 3 key **bibliographic references** at the end of the abstract.

Please use 12-point Arial font, single- spaced, making sure to spellcheck and proofread your abstract before submitting.

Abstracts will be subjected to blind review by a minimum of two referees from the Scientific Committee.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Submit your paper via the link on the conference website at: www.irtp.co.uk