



University of Shkoder
"Luigj Gurakuqi"

Faculty of Economy,
Tourism Department



International Scientific Conference

Conftour 2026



**The Future of Tourism:
Adapting to Digitalization,
Responsustable and
Meaningful Tourism**

CONFERENCE AGENDA



Conference date
8-9 May 2026



Place
Faculty of Economy, University
"Luigj Gurakuqi", Shkoder (Albania)
A1 Conference Room

Program

Date: 08 May 2026

Moderator: Arjan Gjura (PhD,c)

09:00 – 09:30 Registration of Participants

09:30 – 10:15 Opening Remarks

Prof. Dr. Tonin Gjura, Rector of the University of Shkodra “Luigj Gurakuqi”

Ms. Teuta Qyteza, Deputy Mayor of Shkodra Municipality

Ms. Holta Duda, Prefect of Shkodra County

Mr. Edmond Ndou, Chair of Shkodra County Council

Ms. Marjana Koçeku, Member of the Albanian Parliament

Mr. Artan Çobi, Member of the Montenegrin Parliament

10.15-12.00 Plenary Session

“The future of Tourism Skills: Assessing Today’s Capabilities and Tomorrow’s Needs”-
Prof. Dr. Drita Kruja, Rektore, Universiteti European i Tiranës

“Roli i Institucioneve të Dijes në Zhvillimin e Qëndrueshëm të Turizmit në Shqipëri” Luan
Dervishej (ATI) Instituti Shqiptar i Turizmit

“The elephant in the room: Marketing- Led Growth and the Limits of Dynamic Capabilities
in Albania’s Tourism Development” Vera Ndrecaj, PhD, Cardiff Metropolitan University

“Reimagining Tourism in the Digital Age: Innovation, Smart Destinations and Sustainable
Value Creation”. Valentina Ndou, Associate Professor, University of Salento (Italy)

11.30-12.00 Coffee Break and Networking

12.00-14.00 Paralel Sessions

Session 1 Digital Transformation and Sustainable Development in Tourist Destinations (Online)

Session Chairs: Prof. Dr. Ermira H. Kalaj; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nevila Mehmetaj

Room: A1, economic faculty

1. Albania's Silver Tourism: Present Situation and Potential
Mustafa Necati ÇOBAN, Mehmet Ali ÖZKAN
2. Deep Tourism, Experiential Learning, and Human Resource Development in a Regional City Facing Population Decline: A Japan–Korea Joint Capstone Program in Sasebo, Japan
Satoshi ISHIDA
3. Assessment of Antalya Destination in View of European Capital of Smart Tourism Initiative
Sibel MEHTER AYKIN
4. Trashëgimia kulturore si identitet turistik në Maqedoninë e Veriut: analiza e destinacioneve turistike
Sibella ALIMOVSKA
5. Artificial Intelligence in Tourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Digital Transformation and Value Co-Creation
Georgios VASILEIADIS
6. Assessing the Challenges and Needs of Tourism Higher Education Programs in Albania
Eleina QIRICI, Ira GJIKA
7. Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Traditions: Social, Economic and Environmental Dimensions of Development
Arbra NIKÇI ZALLQI, Alberta TAHIRI, Diellza MISINI
8. The role of Information and Communication Technology in Tourism Development: An Econometric Analysis for Albania
Doriana DEDA, Nevila MEHMETAJ
9. Informality and Tourism Performance in the Western Balkans: A Panel Data Analysis
Nevila MEHMETAJ, Doriana DEDA, Denisa MEHMETAJ
10. Visual Communication and Tourist Decision-Making in the Digital Era: A Qualitative Analysis of Social Media Content
Denisa MEHMETAJ

Session 2 Cultural Identity, Creativity, and Innovation in Tourism Development

Session Chairs: *Dr. Romina Dhora, Dr. Arjeta Anamali, Dr. Arjola Dergjini*

Room: *201, 2nd Floor, Faculty of Economics*

1. Perceptions of the Local Community on the Impact of Tourism on Cultural Identity in the City of Shkodra.
Anisa HALAJ, Admir DAHATI
2. From Sporadic Murals to Strategic Urban Art: Rethinking the Role of Murals in Sustainable Tourism Development through the Cases of Shkodra and Rome
Andi HILA
3. Zhvillimi i Turizmit Kulturor - Asetet dhe potencialet kulturore në Rajonin e Pejës
Bekë KUQI, Bekim VISHAJ
4. Dark Tourism and Generation Z: Motivations, Experiences and Behavioral Intentions
Romina DHORA, Arjeta ANAMALI
5. Komunikimi vizual : roli i imazheve në promovimin e Shkodrës si destinacion turistik
Emanuela SHYTI
6. Roli i Marketingut në Zhvillimin e Destinacioneve Turistike
Fatmire SHALA DRESHAJ, Brunilda LICAJ, Kushtrim DRESHAJ
7. Integrimi i Muzikës Françeskane në Dizajnin e Përvojës së Turizmit Religjioz. Rast Studimor i Muzeut Audio të Veprës së Martin Gjokës.
Dorjan ULAJ, Alma HAFIZI
8. Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Tourism: The Case Study of Mrizi i Zanave Agrotourism
Drilona LULI, Albana BORIÇI
9. Algorithmic recommendations and tourist interest in promoting Albania
Luis HYSAJ, Admir DAHATI
10. Ndërtimi i besimit në epokën digjitale: Roli i sigurisë së të dhënave në konsolidimin e turizmit domethënës
Rialda XHIZDARI, Klevent XHIZDARI, Sibela IMERAJ

Section 3: Digital Transformation and “Smart Tourism”: Artificial Intelligence, Data, and Innovation in Destination Development

Session Chairs: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Brilanda Bushati; Arjan Gjura (PhD candidate); Gentian Mema, PhD candidate)

Room: Computer Lab 203, 2nd Floor, Faculty of Economics

1. Regional Revitalization and Cultural Heritage in the Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Albergo Diffuso Towns in Japan
Shinichi BABA, Blendi BAROLLI
2. Perceptimet dhe praktikat e përdorimit të teknologjisë së informacionit në industrinë hoteliere: Rasti i rajonit të Shkodrës
Arian GJURA, Brilanda BUSHATI
3. Kasuga Village Revitalization Project: Enhancing Local Attractiveness and Creating a “Relationship Population”
Blendi BAROLLI, Enkelejda KUCAJ.
4. Climate Change Impacts on Rural and Agrotourism Development in Albania: Evidence from the Vjosa River Watershed
Enkelejda KUCAJ, Blendi BAROLLI, Anira GJONI, Azem BARDHI
5. Ai-driven digital twin and agent based simulation For smart tourism management: a case study of Shkodra.
Suela SERANI, Brilanda BUSHATI
6. From Booking Platforms to Tourism Intelligence: A Power BI Dashboard Approach for Destination Analysis in Northern Albania
Fatjona KRONI, Ermira KALAJ
7. STEM-Driven Digital Transformation of Tourism: Immersive Technologies and Smart Sustainable Visitor Experiences
Enkelelda LACEJ
8. Using Big Data in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems in Tourism: Analyzing tourists profile in accommodation structures in North of Albania
Seida DAJJA, Ermira KALAJ
9. Zhvillimi i programeve të turizmit në arsimin e lartë shqiptar dhe procesi i akreditimit: një analizë cilësore bazuar në eksperiencën vlerësimi
Brilanda BUSHATI, Ira GJIKA

Session 4 Tourism Education, Skills Development, and Industry Performance

Session Chairs: Prof. Dr. Arjeta Troshani; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ardita Borici; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emi Bejleri

Room: PhD Room, 1st Floor, Faculty of Economics

11. Does Practical Training Bridge the Education–Labor Market Match in Hospitality and Tourism? Evidence from “Hamdi Bushati” Vocational School in Albania
Albjona SELIMI, Ardita BORICI
12. Zhvillimi i Qëndrueshëm dhe Biodiversiteti në Destinacionet Veriore: Dibër, Kukës, Theth dhe Lugina e Valbonës
Arjeta TROSHANI, Seditë DURRAJ, Arjeta ANAMALI
13. Shfrytëzimi i studimeve në degen e Edukimit Fizik dhe Sporte në Veprimtarinë e Turizmit
Ditmar JUBICA, Blerta DRAGUSHA
14. Digital Skills and Employment Stability in Sustainable Tourism: Evidence from Northern Albania
Volfrida TOMA, Ardita BORICI, Seditë DURAJ
15. Written Landscapes, Living Destinations: Early European Travel Accounts of the Northern Albanian Highlands as a Foundation for Meaningful and Responsible Cultural Tourism
Valjeta GJYLBEGAJ
16. Shaping the Future of Tourism: Digital Transformation, Sustainable Innovation, and Human-Centered Experiences in a Changing Global Landscape
Ditmira TAHIRI, Medjon HYSENAJ
17. Artificial Intelligence for Strategic Planning of Tourist Destinations: Evidence from the Shkodra Region
Lorna BUSHATI, Arjeta TROSHANI

Session 5 Sustainable and Community-Based Tourism: Environment, Rural Development, and Local Sustainability

Session Chairs: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mirjam Dibra; Dr. Alkida Hasaj; Irsida Koplaku, PhD (c)

Room: 202, 2nd Floor, Faculty of Economics

1. Potentials, Challenges and Community Perspectives for Rural Tourism Development in Krajë area: A Pathway to Sustainable Local Revitalization
Mirjam DIBRA, Artan ÇOBI
2. Rethinking Tourism Sustainability through Circular Economy Practices: Evidence from the Shkodra Region
Valbona PAJA

3. Climate Criteria in Tourism: Albania's Path toward European Integration under the Green Agenda
Besmir BEKA
4. Post-Tourism Season Macro-and Mesoplastic Pollution in Velipoja Beach: Implications for Sustainable Tourism
Vera GJINAJ, Anila NEZIRI
5. The Role of Perceived Water Quality in Sustainable Tourism Development: A Qualitative Analysis of Shkodra Lake and Buna River
Luljeta JAKU
6. From Tradition to Experience: Creative Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Peja and Rugova
Alberta TAHIRI, Anela DŽOGOVIĆ, Nora DRAGA
7. The integration of beekeeping in family hostels as a driving factor for the development of rural tourism and the growth of the local economy in the northern region of Albania
Sidita ZAGANJORI, Ariana STRINIQI
8. Meaningful and Sustainable Tourism in Northern Albania
Fatjon MLLOJA, Jetmir MUJA, Sabrina KUÇI, Zamira SHKRELI, Nimete KALABOVIC MUJA
9. From Potential to Practice: Strategic Approaches for Community-Based Tourism Development in Shale Valley/Albania
Mirjam DIBRA, Marjana KOÇEKU
10. Integrating Natural and Cultural Resources for Sustainable Tourism Development
Idriz KOVAÇI, Alberta TAHIRI, Blerina BYTYÇI

Session 6 Governance, Business Models, and Economic Factors in Tourism Development

Session Chairs: Prof. Dr. Fatbardha Molla; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Albana Boriçi; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ylvije Kraja

Room: 103, 1st Floor, Faculty of Economics

1. Modelet e Biznesit në Turizëm: Trajtim Teorik për Krijimin e Vlerës dhe Integrimin e Grupeve të Interesit
Vasilika ZEKA, Kleida HETA, Irma BARAKU
2. Smart Tourism and Digital Transformation: Implications for Tourism Enterprise Performance
Suzana SARACI, Elidiana BASHI

3. Albania's Agro-Processed Exports under Demographic, Macroeconomic, and Geopolitical Pressures: Implications for Sustainable Regional Development
Drini SHKRELI
4. Demographic factors in tourists' preferences, Case study Kosovo
Avni KRASNIQI, Benjamin HASHANI
5. Financial Transparency as a Structural Driver of Tourism Performance: Evidence from Albania
Steisi ÇOKAJ, Fatbardha MOLLA
6. Roli i digjitalizimit të shërbimeve publike të punësimit në zhvillimin e turizmit të qëndrueshëm: Rast studimi Bashkia Shkodër
Antonio KIÇI, Anila DIZDARI
7. The Role of Local Financial Support in Fostering Women Entrepreneurship: Evidence from Montenegro
Jetmir MUJA, Fatjon MLLOJA, Nimete KALABOVIC MUJA, Agron IBRAHIMI, Luljeta MUJA ALAJ
8. Legal Framework of Sustainable Tourism in the Era of Digitalization: A Comparative Analysis of Kosovo–Albania
Muharem FAIKU, Liridona AVDYLI
9. Personality Traits, AI Attitudes, and AI Anxiety: A Path Model Study among Albanian Students
Elona HASMUJAJ, Bujanë TOPALLI, Elvisa DRISHTI, Gentian ULAJ

Date: 09.05.2026

Moderator: Arjan Gjura (PhD,c)

09.30-10.30 Conclusion and Final Thoughts

10.30 Boat tour on Shkodra Lake with a tourist boat

Scientific Committee

Honorary Chair of the Conference

Prof. Dr. Tonin **GJURAJ**, Rector, Universiteti i Shkodrës “Luigj Gurakuqi”, Albania

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