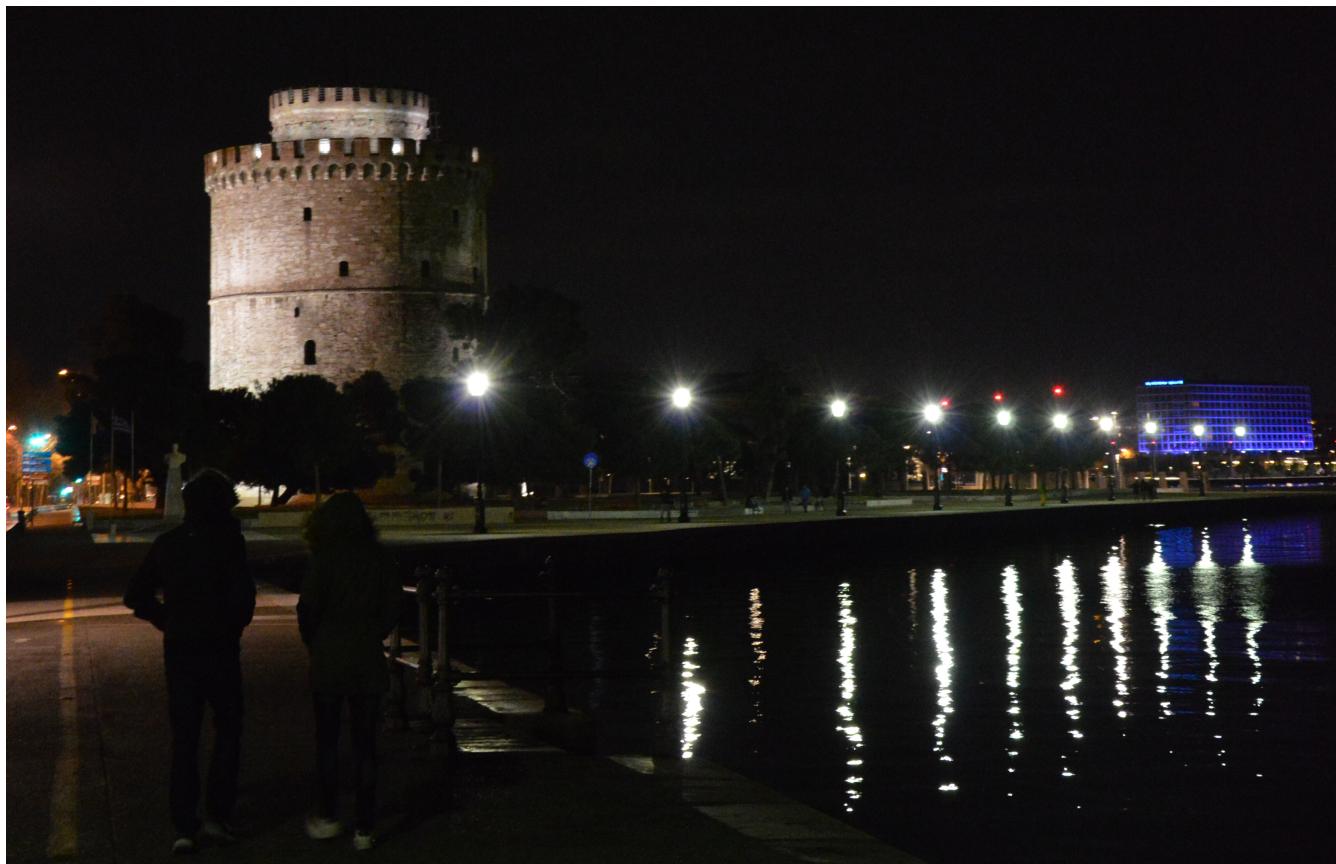




2019

Thessaloniki, Greece



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About the city



Image #2 – Panorama Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki (Θεσσαλονίκη), also commonly known as *Thessalonica*, *Salonica*, or *Salonika* is the second-largest city in Greece, with over 1 million inhabitants. Thessaloniki is located on the Thermaic Gulf, in the northwestern corner of the Aegean Sea.

It is Greece's second major economic, industrial, commercial and political centre. It is a major transportation hub for Greece and southeastern Europe, notably through the Port of Thessaloniki. The city is renowned for its festivals, events and vibrant cultural life, making it Greece's cultural capital.

The city of Thessaloniki was founded in 315 BC by Cassander of Macedon. An important metropolis in the Roman period, Thessaloniki was the second largest and wealthiest city of the Byzantine Empire. It was conquered by the Ottomans in 1430, and passed from the Ottoman Empire to Greece on 8 November 1912.

Thessaloniki is home to numerous notable Byzantine monuments, including the Paleochristian and Byzantine monuments of Thessaloniki, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as well as several Roman, Ottoman and Sephardic Jewish structures. The city's main university, Aristotle University, is the largest in Greece and the Balkans.

The city is a popular tourist destination in Greece. In 2013, National Geographic Magazine included Thessaloniki in its top tourist destinations worldwide, while in 2014 Financial Times FDI magazine (Foreign Direct Investments) declared Thessaloniki as the best mid-sized European city of the future for human capital and lifestyle.

Visa

Greece is part of the Schengen zone, so citizens of Schengen member countries can travel to Greece without a visa.

For more information, please refer to the following webpages:

- <https://www.mfa.gr/en/visas/visas-for-foreigners-traveling-to-greece/countries-requiring-or-not-requiring-visa.html>
- <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/>

Conference Venue

The proposed venue for GUADEC 2019 is the **University of Macedonia** (UoM). It is a modern state university which is the continuation of the historical Graduate School of Industrial Studies of Thessaloniki. In its six decades of history, it has always been well-known for the quality of its studies and research, the environment of freedom and democracy, and the possibilities it provides for individual development. Furthermore, it is the first certified "Green" university in Greece, which shows its commitment to a healthy and sustainable campus environment and city life.



Image #3 – University of Macedonia

The University of Macedonia is very active in its international relations, having cooperations with a number of foreign universities, associations, and other entities. Furthermore, the department of Applied Informatics makes software, and especially free software, a main focus of a large part of the university's studies and research.

There is a modern conference centre within the University of Macedonia, which contains a number of different auditoriums and other rooms with different capacities, ranging from 38 to 450 people. The campus is located only a short walk from the centre of the city, in close proximity of several cafés, restaurants, and other historical and cultural spots.

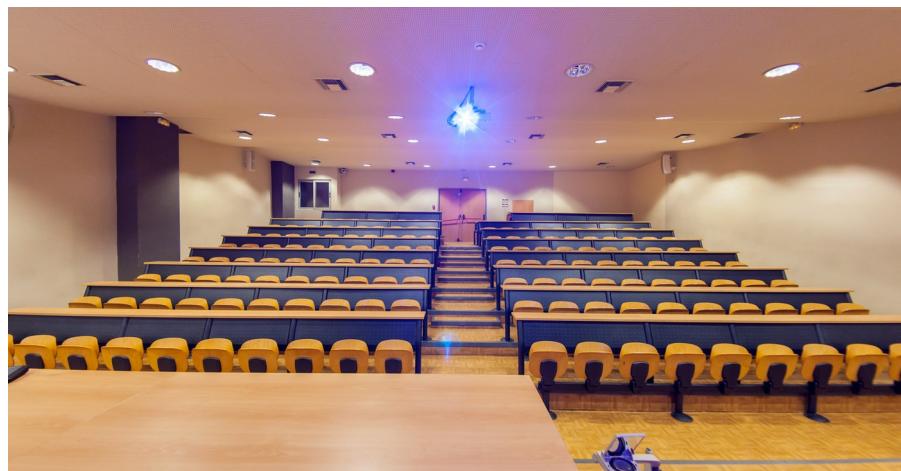
For more information about the university, please visit:

<http://www.uom.gr/index.php?newlang=eng>

You can find a description of the conference venues here:

http://www.uom.gr/media/docs/pdf/2017.05.03_UoM_EVENT&CONFERENCE%20ROOMS_spreads%20final%204press.pdf

Pictures taken from their brochure. We are not sure which rooms they will give us.



Concept and dates

GUADEC traditionally takes place in the summer. This is convenient, as it will allow guests to visit the famed Greek beaches. With that in mind:

- June is not convenient, because it is exam season for almost all higher-education institutes in the country.
- Late July is not convenient, because DebConf happens then.
- The first half of August is not convenient (especially 10-15) because it's a religious holiday then and the city is practically deserted.

This leaves us with **early July** and **late August**. Late August is a more convenient time for the local organisers, because some of them have prior commitments in early July. Most likely dates for the conference are **August 23 to 28**.

Plan for the days

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tue-Wed
pre-registration + social event?	conference + social event	conference + social event	conference	BoF day, possibly including a half-day trip to the beach	BoF days

Social Events

So far, the ideas about the social events have been the following:

- **Greek night:** This phrase has come to denote a long dinner with Greek music (particularly urban folk, i.e. “laiko”), dancing, and lots of Greek food and wine. A staple suggestion for tourists from abroad, this will be a good chance for participants to get to know both the Greek cuisine and the Greek musical scene.
- **Science museum:** A few kilometres outside Thessaloniki stands Noesis, a museum dedicated to science and technology. Available spectacles include a planetarium, an exhibition of Ancient Greek technology, and lastly a cosmotheatre and simulator that can offer glimpses into other places and times of the universe’s history. The museum also has a restaurant inside, so the excursion could be combined with a nice dinner.
- **Beach bar:** For an option that focuses mainly on drinks and music, a beach bar could be considered. This refers to huts on the beach that play music and serve drinks (and sometimes food too).
- **Pic-Nic:** Thessaloniki has a wonderful seaside, from which one can get some sun (during the day) or enjoy the city lights (during the night). Plus, the calming effect of watching the waves is of course undeniable. Having a pic-nic could be a good (and very economical) idea to unwind from the conference, enjoy local street food and Thessaloniki’s micro-brewery beers, and have a quite afternoon without a lot of noise. This will depend on the weather, of course, but during the Greek summer this is generally not an issue
- **Walking/hiking:** Thessaloniki is a very friendly city towards running and walking. Its seaside alone offers almost 10km of beautiful routes to walk, half of it completely flat and half having gentle slopes alongside. For an even more beautiful but more tiring option, the old city (Ano Polis) has many well-preserved old buildings and winding roads with a scenic view. Reaching the castle at the end offers a majestic view of the entire city.

Potential places and prices:

- **Greek night:** This is the option with the most numerous options by far. Possibilities include:
 - Polis convention centre:* In Tagarades. About **25€** per capita (No negotiations with orchestra yet).
 - Nouvelle events:* ~**19€** per person (full menu and unlimited drink)
 - Platanakia:* in Panorama, in the middle of the forest. Approx. **20€** per person, depending on menu and drinks. Must add transportation costs. On the weekends, it would be best to start after 20:30 – 21:00.
- **Science museum:** Tickets range from **7€** a person to **14€** a person depending on how many spectacles (one to four) each person would like to see. Seeing them all would take about two hours. A big buffet would cost about **25€** a person, independent of the afore-mentioned ticket.
- **Pic-Nic:** Thessaloniki's seaside has several (at least 6-7) grassy parks along its length. Although we have yet to approach the municipality for negotiations, we know it has happened before, and the odds of all parks being busy at any given day ought to be vanishingly small.
- **Beach bar:** A nice idea for a half-day trip, possibly on Monday, would be to visit one of several of the wonderful beaches in close proximity of the city. We do not have a specific offer at this point, but it could easily be arranged if there is interest.

Travel

International

Being the largest city in a couple-hundred-kilometre radius, Thessaloniki is well-connected to other cities. From Athens, the country's capital, one can reach Thessaloniki by either a 45-minute flight or by a ~6-hour train ride; taking the bus is also an option.

Airplane

Thessaloniki is connected by air to several major European cities, especially during the summer season. Major airports in Asia or North America can typically be reached with one connection.

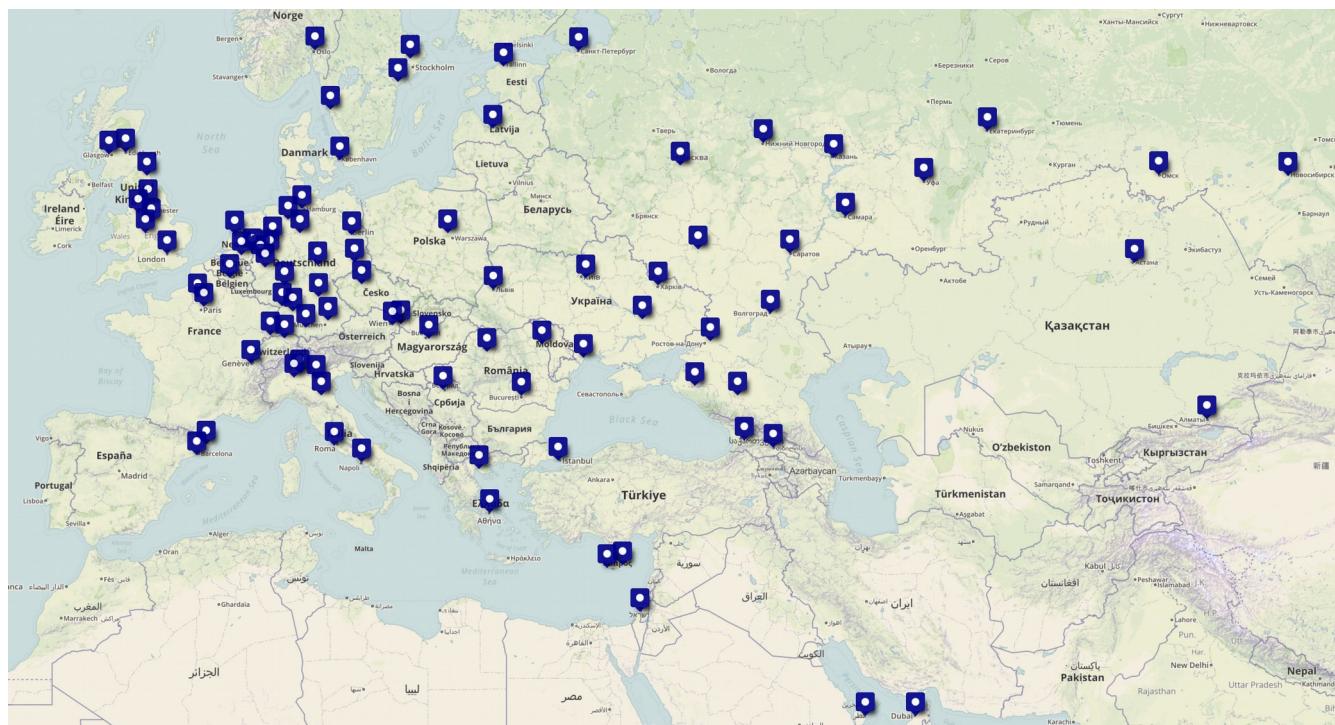


Image #4 – International direct flights to/from Thessaloniki (incl. seasonal, excl. charter) as of August 2018

Train from Athens

There are 6 daily trains from Athens to Thessaloniki that take 5-6 hours and cost appr. **55€**.

Info: <https://tickets.trainose.gr/dromologia/>

International train connections include *Sofia*, *Belgrade*, and *Bucharest*:

<http://www.trainose.gr/en/passenger-activity/international-services/international-railway-services>

Bus

Thessaloniki is also accessible by bus from a number of Greek, other Balkan, and even German cities:

<https://www.checkmybus.com/thessaloniki>

The city is directly accessible from the airport using the X1 public bus line. A single ticket costs **2€** per person and buses run approximately twice an hour (<http://oasth.gr/#en/routeinfo/list/61/12/73>). Taxis from the airport to the city centre have a fixed price of **20€** per trip for a maximum of 4 people. Alternatively, this van service (http://www.thessalonikivantransfer.gr/index_en.html#about) can arrange trips for up to 8 people for a price of **25€** per trip.

Local

Public transport

Local bus ticket costs **1€**. You can buy it from local kiosks or from a machine on the bus (keep in mind that it doesn't give you change).

Accommodation

Since there are several accommodations options in the city, which are mostly concentrated in the city centre and therefore near the venue, we recommend spreading attendees over a number of accommodation options. The high availability and price options will make sure that everyone can find an accommodation option that will satisfy their personal taste and budget.

The cheapest options would start from approximately **10€** for a dormitory bed in a hostel. For a stay in a *3* hotel*, the price of a single room is typically around **50 to 60€ per night**. Fancier options for *5* hotels* can cost up to **200€** per night for a single room.

Last but not least, there is a very high availability of apartments to rent from individuals, for example on platforms such as *AirBnB*.

The list of hotels will be announced at the future website. The University of Macedonia have also offered to let us make hotel bookings through them, using their preferential rates.

Dining

Owing to the city's persistently cosmopolitan nature, as well as a large influx of refugees from Asia Minor and Constantinople, the cuisine of Thessaloniki leaves little to be desired. Options for breakfast include **bougatsa**, a kind of pastry that comes in both confectionery and savoury variants; various pitas, thin layers of baked dough with one layer of (usually) savoury filling; and lastly the humble but filling **koulouri**, a kind of slightly sweetened bread with sesame. Options for lunch and dinner include the various taverns around town, or (for fast-food equivalents) pizza parlours and the ever-popular **gyros**.

It is of note that the Eastern Orthodox fasting tradition makes Greece one of the most vegetarian-friendly places in Europe. It is common for a tavern to offer 5-6 different *vegan* dishes among the rest of its menu, usually based on vegetables, legumes and/or pasta (locally called *makaronia*). Increasingly, even fast-food parlours will offer at least one *vegan dish* (eg vegetable burgers) apart from just fried potatoes.

Lovers of confectionery might enjoy **Trigona Panoramatos** (Panorama triangles) and **kazan dipi** (=the northern Greek equivalent of crème brûlée), as well as other sweets available in the city's sweet shops.

The temporal and monetary budgets for food are approximately as follows:

For breakfast, a koulouri costs about **0.5€** and will (if there is a seller nearby) take less than a minute for purchase. The various bougatsas and pitas cost between **1.5** and **3€**, and will take some 20' to go back-and-forth to the bakery.

As for lunch and dinner, the gyros will cost about **3€** per piece for a decent portion, or **~7€** for a very hearty meal, with a maximum serving time of 5'. A tavern's cost will hover around **7€** a portion, or **10€-12€/person** including salads and drinks; an excursion will take about 60'-75' back-to-back including the walk to and from the shop. Other fast food costs between those two, and higher-end restaurants can go for **20€/person** or higher.



Image #5 – Bougatsa



Image #6 - Gyros

Tourism

Historical tourism

Having been an important metropolis almost since its founding, Thessaloniki has amassed a wealth of monuments that can be visited with a simple walk or bus ride in the city. The most prominent is the White Tower, located next to the sea in the centre of the city. This was part of the ancient fortress, which is still preserved in several parts, most notably the Ano Poli section, which also offers a stunning view over the city and the sea. Inside the centre, one will find the Galerius complex, including the palace, the Kamara arch, and the Rotunda temple. A bit further away, one can visit the Roman forum. Last but not least, Thessaloniki has several museums, the most notable of which are the Archaeological and the Byzantine museum.



Image #7 - Arch of Galerius (Kamara)

Religious tourism

Thessaloniki has an abundance of Christian churches, several of which are older than 1000 years. The oldest, the afore-mentioned Rotunda, is the second-oldest church in all of Europe, as it was built in 306 AD. There are also surviving mosques and synagogues in the city, although much fewer than there used to be and generally not used for regular service: the Yeni Camii and Monastiri Synagogue are examples.



Image #8 - Rotunda (left) and Image #9 - Basilica of Agios Dimitrios (right)

Natural tourism

Within 35 kms from the city (generally a 30-minute drive) one can find the Petralona cave, also known as the Cave of the Red Stones, where a fossilised archaic human skull was also found. A bit further away, at approximately 2:30h by car, one can find the Meteora monasteries, built on top of unique rock formations, which attract visitors from all over the world.

Beach tourism



Image #10 - Valti beach, Halkidiki

From Thessaloniki, several beaches can be reached within a two-hour drive: These include Neoi Poroi, Ammolofoi and the entire peninsula of Halkidiki. Halkidiki deserves special mention, as its close proximity to the city and abundance of calm sandy beaches with clean water have made it so popular with the city's population as to be the subject of jokes.



Image #11 – Boat bar

Finally, a unique experience would be to board one of the many boat-bars that are near the White Tower, which offer a brief tour of Thessaloniki's waters and waterfront view, together with drinks and music.

Team

John Nikolaides is an Electrical and Computer Engineer currently doing his PhD thesis. He has worked for GStreamer as part-time help for ToolsOnAir, and is currently working on developing an open-source toolkit for fractal analysis as a personal project. In his spare time he enjoys cycling (commuting and recreational) and sword-fighting..

Paraskevi Nikolaidou (also known as **Vivia**) is currently working as a GStreamer developer. She has been active in the Open Source community and has participated in various Free and Open Source projects since 2004 when she joined the Agent Academy project. Vivia completed her PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in 2011, where she worked on multi-agent systems as well as data mining methods in supply chain management. Her open source contributions range from SCCORI Agent which was part of her PhD studies, to her contributions to the GStreamer multimedia framework, passing by her involvement with the aMSN project during her spare time. She is currently a core developer of GStreamer, on which she has been working professionally since 2012.

Sebastian Dröge (slomo) is a Free Software developer and one of the GStreamer maintainers and core developers. He has been involved with the project for over 10 years now. He also contributes to various other Free Software projects, like Debian, Rust, GNOME and WebKit. While finishing his master's degree in computer sciences at the University of Paderborn in Germany, he started working as a contractor for GStreamer and related technologies. Sebastian is one of the founders of Centricular, a company providing consultancy services, where he's working from his new home in Greece on improving GStreamer and the Free Software ecosystem.

Efstathios Iosifidis (also known as Stathis) is a veterinarian currently working at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki at the Veterinary School. He has been involved with FOSS communities for more than 10 years now. He was one of the two who started the openSUSE community in Greece, one of the most active local openSUSE communities, which organised the openSUSE conference in 2013. He is involved with the local GNOME community as translation coordinator and community promotion, ownCloud and Nextcloud communities mostly around translations and promoting those projects in Greece.

Athanasiros Tryfonidis (also known as **Thanos** or **tomtryf**) is a Computer Engineer currently working as a System administrator. His journey with GNOME and Open Source communities started about 12 year ago, when he contributed to local GNOME community as translator. He also loves playing with Web technologies - breaking and fixing things mostly!

Conference organisation will also be handled by the **University of Macedonia**. They can take care of finding and contacting local sponsors, sending invitation letters, contacting local authorities in the

city, taking care of conference meals, and even contacting travel agencies to organise a day or half-day trip.

GFOSS – *Open Technologies Alliance* (<https://gfoss.eu>), a non-profit organisation that promotes open standards and technologies, are also willing to help with GUADEC organization.

Additionally, there are two hacker-spaces in Thessaloniki, *Tech Ministry* and *Lambda Space*, whose members would probably be glad to actively participate in GUADEC's organisation.

Budget

If the conference is co-organized with the University of Macedonia (UoM) all conference room and halls are free of rental charge. UoM hopefully will handle finances as local organization. Alternative option is GFOSS (<https://gfoss.eu/>).

Venue

Venue – UoM offer	Estimated low	Estimated high
Organization/Implementation/Secretarial services	6000 €	8000 €
Technical Support/H/Y Support	~700 €	~700 €
Conference Material (folders/pens/notebooks/bags/etc.)	3000 €	5000 €
Total	9700 €	13700 €

Venue – Volunteers - Speakers	Estimated low	Expected	Estimated high
Video recording & streaming (we have an offer to pay only the tickets for the team)	2000 €	2500 €	3000 €
Keynote speakers	2000 €	2500 €	3000 €
Water – Snacks for speakers/volunteers	200 €	200 €	250 €
Speaker & volunteer gifts	500 €	800 €	1500 €
Volunteers T-shirts	150 €	300 €	400 €
Total	4850 €	6300 €	8150 €

Catering Services

Offer From University Of Macedonia

- 13 coffee breaks x 200 People (restaurant or ground floor of university)
(includes cold/warm beverages, refreshment, water & cookies)

Price: 3.50€/Person

- 6 lunches x 200 People (University Restaurant)
(includes warm/cold entrees, salads, main platters (fish/meat, vegetarian, fruit/desserts, refreshments/beers)

Price: 15€/Person

- 1 Gala Reception X 200 People (WAR Museum/University Gardens)
(includes warm/cold entrees, salads, main platters (fish/meat, vegetarian, fruit/desserts, refreshments/wine/coffee)

Price ~16€/Person

Total: 700 + 3000 + 3200 = **6900 €**

NOTE: Each participant can pay for themselves.

Travel – Accomodation	Estimated low	Expected	Estimated high
Travel committee budget	30000 €	30000 €	35000 €

Social Events	Estimated low	Expected	Estimated high
Social event 1	600 €	1500 €	2500 €
Social event 2	600 €	3000 €	7800 €
Trip to beach	300 €	400 €	500 €
Total	1500 €	4900 €	10800 €

Miscellaneous

Other	Estimated low	Expected	Estimated high
Water and snacks for board meeting	50 €	50 €	100 €
Lanyards – badge holders	300 €	400 €	500 €
T-Shirts	800 €	1300 €	1500 €
Stickers	100 €	250 €	300 €
Stationery	100 €	100 €	200 €
Other	500 €	800 €	1000 €
Total	1850 €	2900 €	3600 €

Estimated total

Best case: 47900 €

Expected: 57000 €

Worst case: 78150 €

Income

	Estimated low	Expected	Estimated high
Donations	4000 €	5000 €	8000 €
Sponsorship (via foundation)*	30000 €	30000 €	40000 €
Sponsorship (local)	2000 €	5000 €	10000 €
Merchandise	1000 €	1000 €	1500 €
Total	37000 €	41000 €	59500 €

* We were unable to get an estimate from the Sponsorship Committee

Appendix

Organization/Implementation/Secretarial Services include:

- Organization and supervision of technical support (PC), technical equipment of the halls
- Communication, organization of interpretation / translation services
- Supervision of halls during the conference, registration, reception of officials
- Supervision, contact with a hotel regarding accommodation and other guest needs
- Courtesy of Flowering of Rooms
- Auxiliary consultation and assistance to food services
- Contact with Catering/ event hall for gala dinner
- Communication, organization, editing of gala dinner music
- Compilation, editing and production of invitations for the opening of the congress / concluding dinner
- Organization of protocol labels, sending invitations to Thessaloniki and Athens protocol
- Managing registration registrations, contacting foreign guests / subscribers for possible queries
- Telephone communication, organization of meetings and communication with local authorities in the city
- Official follow-up confirmation of officials
- Writing, ordering and editing a commemorative plaque / commemorative gift
- Ability to address / present a conference in Greek / English
- Contact with travel agencies, organize a city tour / escort, escort if necessary
- (Telephone communication, drafting and sending letters for road cleaning)

Sponsors / Sponsors of communication

- Communicating and securing communication sponsors
- Writing letters and sponsorship packages
- Send sponsorship packages, telephone follow up to sponsors and communication sponsors
- Organization, overseeing donor benefits,
- Supervision of advertising stands on the hotel premises
- Writing and sending thank-you letters to the sponsors

Image

1. By maragathou, CC BY-SA 4.0,

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