

2022-1-EL02-KA151-YOU-000051881

# ESC NETWORKING AND STUDY VISIT

8-12 April 2024  
Thessaloniki, Greece



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# Welcome!

We are happy to host you in the international ESC networking meeting and study visit in Thessaloniki, Greece. The meeting will be hosted in the office of United Societies of Balkans in the city center, with integrated study visits in local partner hosting organisations and a one day study trip in the rural communities of Stratonis and Arnaia in Aristotelis Municipality in Halkidiki, where we organise youth activities during the last years.

Therefore we provide you within this info pack a warm welcome!

Moreover, the info pack contains information about your travel, accommodation and activity program. Please, contact us if you have any questions.

Christian and Christos: [volunteer@usbngo.gr](mailto:volunteer@usbngo.gr)

We are happy to see you soon in Thessaloniki!



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# About the event

United Societies of Balkans has been implementing volunteering projects as part of EVS/ESC since 2008, having hosted more than 600 volunteers in Greece and sent more than 300 participants in missions abroad.

“Balkan Hotspot Youth Media Lab” is the continuous ESC program of USB, that has been running since 2009, involving volunteers in the use of media tools and enhancing their relevant skills. As part of its activity, the organization has also developed a network of local hosting partners, which are associations specializing in different fields of volunteering action (support for marginalized groups, non-formal education, work with children and others).

USB supports the participation of these partners in the ESC program, with its capacity as lead organization, taking care of the practicalities of the projects such as accommodation and supporting the general monitoring of the projects. Additionally, USB has been implementing projects in rural communities in the region of Halkidiki, empowering the local youth and area and creating hubs for youth activation.

In this context, a main aim of the event is to implement study visits to the local partners in Thessaloniki to show their work and explore possible hosting opportunities, as well as in the Halkidiki region where there are capacities to host volunteering projects and a broad space for activities.

A crucial part of the meet up will be the networking between participants and organizations active in the European Solidarity Corps, both in hosting and sending volunteers. Let's take this opportunity and boost ESC and volunteering through this meeting!



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# Activity program

<b>Monday 8/4</b>	<b>Arrival</b>
	<b>9:30-12:00</b> <b>Welcoming –get to know each other - Introduction</b>
	<b>13:00-15:00</b> <b>Lunch break</b>
<b>Tuesday 9/4</b>	<b>15:00 – 17:00</b> <b>Organization fair-presentation of organizations</b>
	<b>17:15 – 18:30</b> <b>Networking space, ways to work together, needs matching and offers</b>
	<b>19:30 Dinner</b>
<b>Wednesday 10/4</b>	<b>9:30-12:30</b> <b>Study visits at volunteer accommodation and local hosting ESC partner (Argo Social Enterprise)</b>
	<b>13:00-15:00 Lunch</b>
	<b>15:00-18:00</b> <b>Study visits in partner ESC hosting organizations in the city center (Irida Women Center, Edu Act)</b>
	<b>19:30 Dinner</b>
<b>Thursday 11/4</b>	<b>8:30-15:00</b> <b>Visit to Stratoni- Arnaia in Halkidiki region</b>
	<b>Lunch 13:00-15:00</b> <b>Return trip to Thessaloniki</b>
	<b>18:00-19:00 Debriefing-final networking space-closing sessions.</b> <b>Feedback &amp; Evaluation</b>
	<b>19:30 Dinner</b>
<b>Friday 12/4</b>	<b>Departure</b>



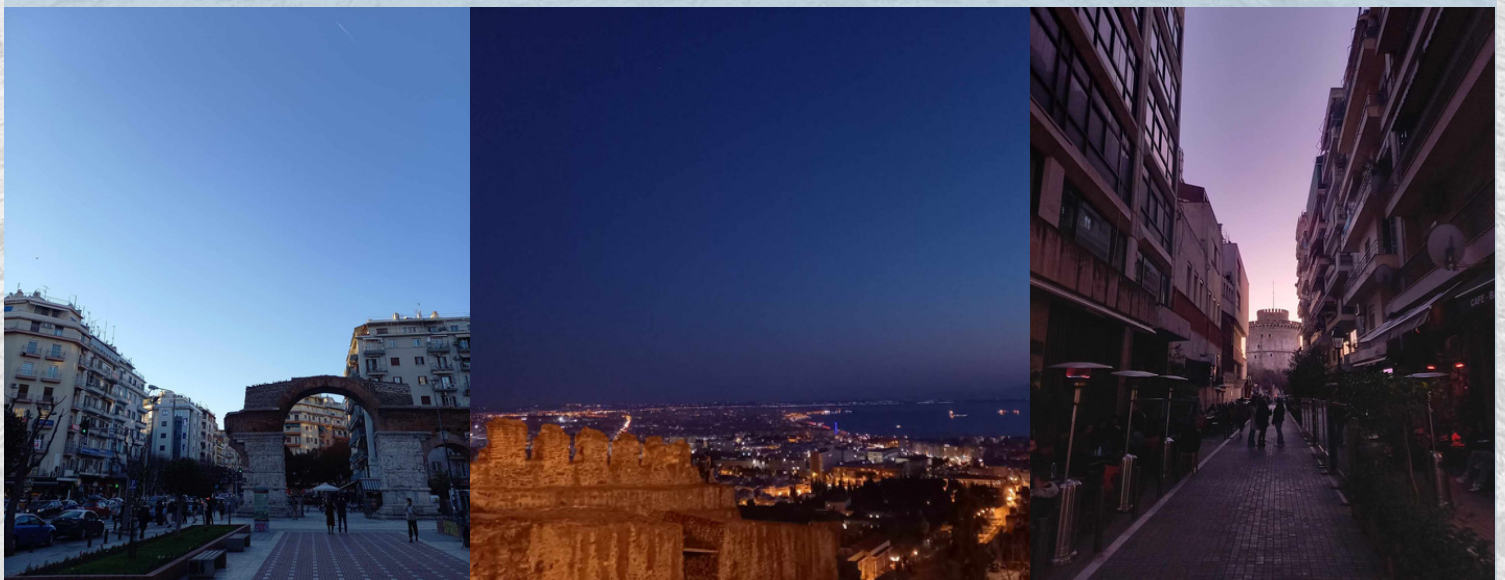
# Welcome to Thessaloniki!

Thessaloniki, Greece's second-largest city, is a vibrant hub on the Balkan Peninsula. Known for its dynamic youth culture, culinary delights, lively nightlife, and rich heritage, the city has earned prestigious titles, including European Capital of Culture in 1997 and European Youth Capital in 2014.

Thessaloniki is an educational center, home to two of Greece's largest universities, with a student population of approximately 200,000 to 250,000, making up a significant portion of the city's residents.

The city boasts a thriving urban culture and holds the title for the highest number of cafés and bars per capita in Europe. Its youthful population and multicultural atmosphere contribute to its reputation as one of Greece's top destinations for nightlife and entertainment, as recognized by Lonely Planet.

Thessaloniki is not only a cultural and entertainment epicenter in northern Greece but also holds a prestigious cultural status nationally. The city hosts major annual events, including the Thessaloniki International Fair, International Thessaloniki Film and Documentary Festivals, and the International Book Fair.



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# Where to meet?

The meeting on the first day will take place at our premises:

Balkan Heart - United Societies of Balkans  
Alexandrou Delmouzou 8, Thessaloniki 546 35  
Tel: +30 2310215629

The office is situated in the city center. Accommodation will be in double and single rooms.

## United Societies of Balkans

United Societies of Balkans (USB) is a non-profit, nongovernmental organization based in Thessaloniki, Greece working in the field of youth mobility, participation and facilitating youth awareness about social issues. It was founded in 2008 by the inception of a group of active young people who wanted to address the social issues which affect the youngsters in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Key areas of the organization's activities concern the defence of human rights, the organization of youth related projects such as youth exchanges and training courses, and the organization of local interventions, seminars and multimedia productions, local and international volunteering projects.



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# Accommodation

Accommodation and breakfast will be at:

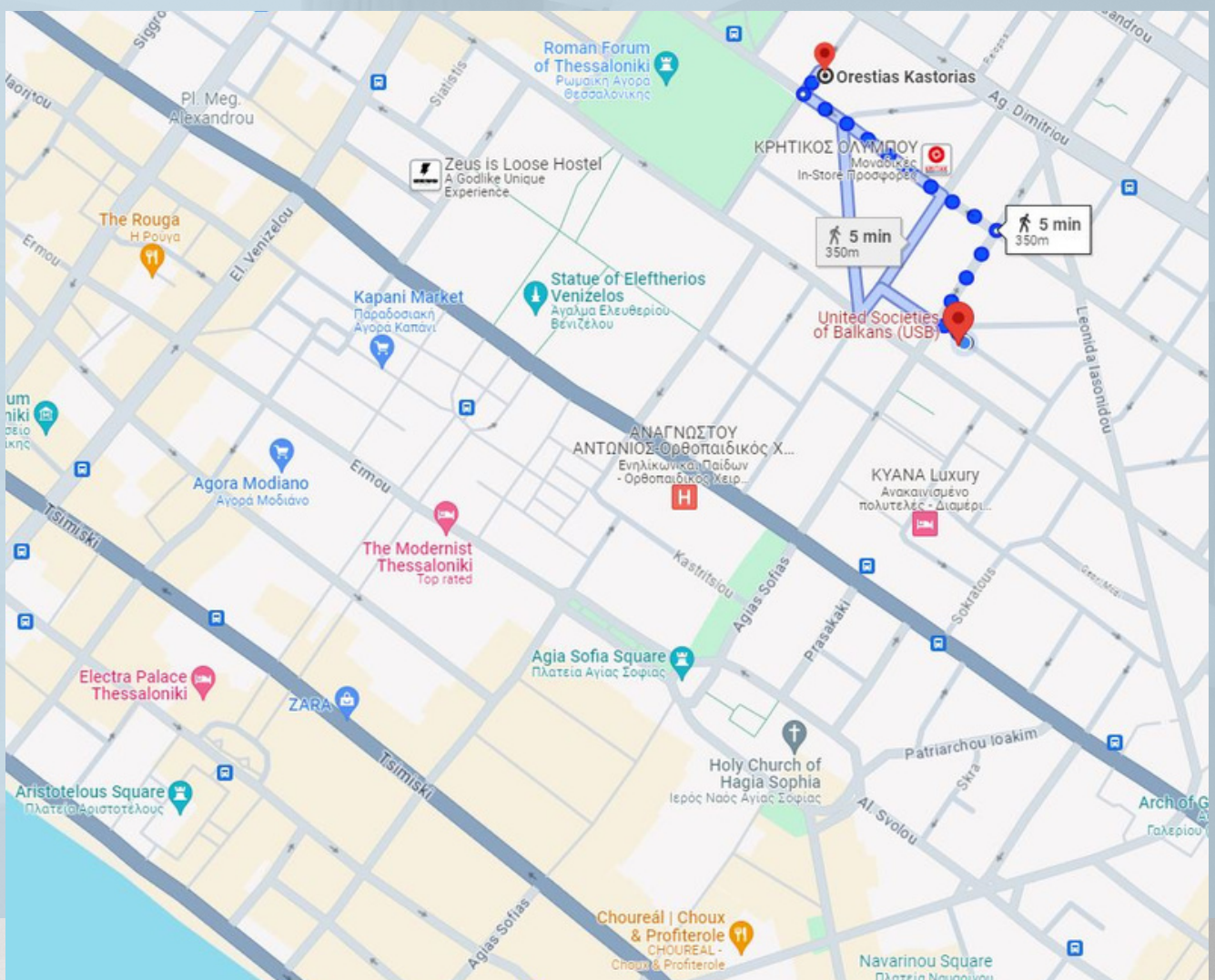
## Orestias Kastorias Hotel

Agnostou Stratiotou 14, 54631, Thessaloniki -Greece,

☎ +30 2310276517

website: <https://okhotel.gr/en/>

The hotel is 5 minutes from the office and in the city center.



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# Food

Greeks consider Thessaloniki as a gourmet city - but bear in mind that this refers to the excellent local specialties and cheap-and-cheerful ouzo taverns rather than to haute cuisine or a range of foreign restaurants. Due to the fact that Thessaloniki remained under Ottoman rule for about 100 years more than southern Greece, it has retained a lot of its Eastern character, including its culinary tastes. Spices in particular play an important role in the cuisine of Thessaloniki, something which is not true to the same degree about Greece's southern regions.

*A light breakfast will be provided at the hotel in the mornings.*

Lunch and dinner will be at a different restaurant each day as we will be around the city and in Halkidiki, so we will inform you accordingly when you're here. Meals will be arranged respecting participants' alimentary needs.



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# Traveling to Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki International Airport "Macedonia" (SKG) is located 13 km south from the center of Thessaloniki, at Thermi.

## Getting to the hotel

To get to the hotel, you will need to catch the 01X bus (KTEL-AERODROMIO) line which connects the airport with the city center (if you arrive after 24:00 you get the line 01N which operates the same route for night hours). The bus stop is 2' walk from the arrivals terminal.

The line operates every 25'-30'. Ticket costs 1.80 EUR, you can buy the ticket from the machines inside the bus (you'll need cash and the machine **doesn't give change**), or from the kiosk next to the bus stop.

Your stop is **ARISTOTELOUS SQUARE (PLATIA ARISTOTELOUS IN GREEK)** and it will take around 45'-1 hour from the airport. After you get off at the stop, the hotel is approximately 5' on foot.

This is the website of the bus company to check routes and extra info on buses if you need: <https://old.oasth.gr/>



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# Travel budget

Participants will have travel budget and will be reimbursed accordingly with the Erasmus+ guide. In order to receive reimbursement they will provide United Societies of Balkans with all necessary travel documents (boarding passes, booking confirmations, physical tickets) as foreseen, that includes all means of transport they may use.

Travel budget is calculated based on the official distance brands listed below:

- 10 and 99KM: 20 EUR per participant
- 100 and 499 KM: 180 EUR per participant
- 500 and 1999 KM: 275 EUR per participant
- 2000 and 2999 KM: 360 EUR per participant
- 3000 and 3999 KM: 530 EUR per participant



*We are looking forward to  
meeting you in Thessaloniki!*

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