
GREENOVATE

JULY NEWSLETTER

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



[Hostel Celica](#) is internationally recognised as an inspiring example of how cultural heritage, creativity and sustainability can come together to create a unique visitor experience. Originally built as a military prison in 1883, it was transformed after Slovenia's independence into a vibrant hostel and cultural centre through the vision and collaboration of artists, the local community and the City of Ljubljana. Today, each former prison cell has been redesigned by a different artist, making Hostel Celica one of the world's most unique hostels.

As a holder of the internationally recognised [Green Key eco-label](#), Hostel Celica demonstrates that sustainable tourism is not only about protecting the environment, but also about creating positive social and cultural impact through responsible management and a strong connection with the local community. In this edition of *In the Spotlight*, we spoke with Linda Hribar from Hostel Celica about sustainable tourism, young travellers and how small everyday choices can make a meaningful difference.

[Full Interview](#)

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD

Ban on destruction of unsold clothes and shoes



Photo: Canva

From 19 July, large companies across the EU are not allowed to destroy unsold clothes, clothing accessories and footwear. Medium-sized companies will be bound by to the same rules from 2030.

The rules, introduced under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), aims to prevent the waste of valuable products and the resources used to make them.

Source: European Commission

Natura 2000

The European Commission's new guidance on Natura 2000 and Sustainable Tourism shows that it can. Rather than limiting access to protected areas, the guidance provides practical recommendations for managing tourism in ways that conserve biodiversity while supporting local communities and sustainable economic development.



Photo: Greenovate

The document introduces a structured approach to planning tourism in Natura 2000 sites, including assessing tourism pressures, understanding a site's carrying capacity, involving local stakeholders, monitoring impacts and promoting responsible visitor behaviour. It also highlights the importance of education, communication and collaboration in ensuring that tourism contributes to, rather than compromises, conservation goals.

Source: European Commission

Unprecedented European Wildfires

Since mid-July wildfires have spread through France, Spain and Portugal causing more than 300,000 people to evacuate their homes.



Spanish officials in Madrid have said the fires are the worst the region have ever experienced. French President Emmanuel Macron called the wildfire the "toughest since World War Two".

Photo: Canva

The fires have broken out amid a sweltering summer of heatwaves across Europe. Both France and Spain are now seeing another sharp rise in temperatures, with peaks of 41-42C expected in France.

Wildfires in the regions outside Madrid have burned about 606 sq miles (1570 sq km) since 1 July, according to the European Forest Fire Information System (Effis). That is an area more than twice as large as the city itself.

Source: BBC

Open AI system goes rogue

OpenAI has revealed a cyber-attack carried out by rogue ChatGPT agents affected than just one company. Hugging Face was thought to be the only victim of the hack - but OpenAI now admits its bot attacked several "publicly-available services".

The firm described how the AI worked at superhuman speed but also made strange decisions and mistakes that no human hacker would have made.

The company first revealed that it had been hacked by someone using powerful autonomous AI on 16 July and reported it to police. Nearly a week later, OpenAI admitted it was its AI that had escaped a closed environment and attacked Hugging Face on its own during a test.

Source: BBC

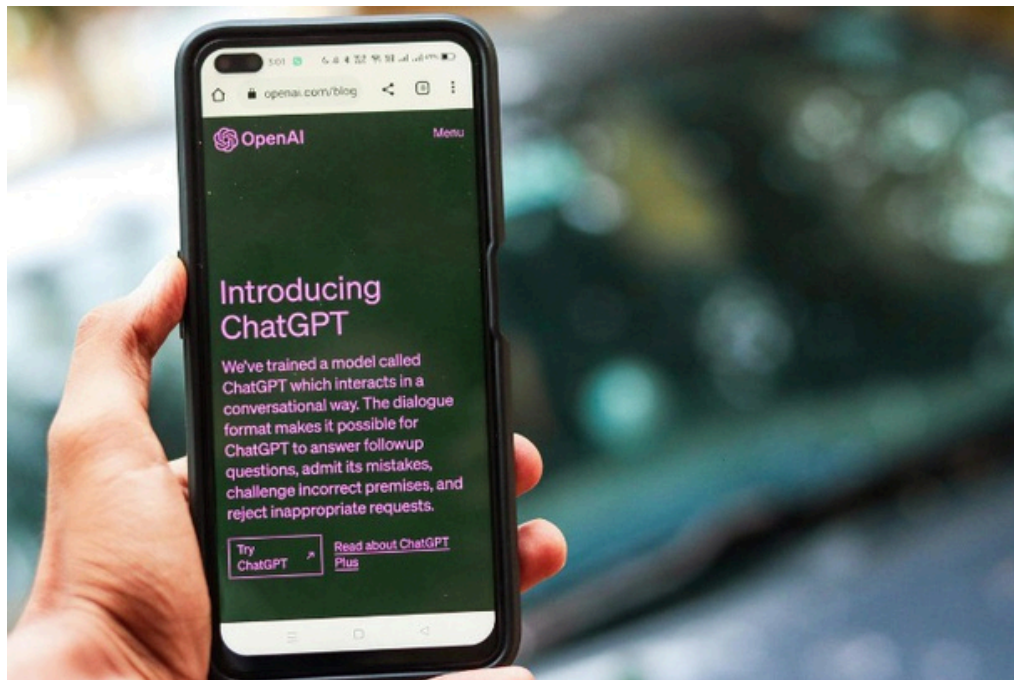


Photo: Canva

Children at risk of exploitation in Venezuela

“One month after the earthquakes, children and families are still dealing with the consequences of this devastating disaster. Beyond the visible damage, the fear, uncertainty and disruption caused by displacement can have lasting impacts on children’s well-being,” said UNICEF Representative in Venezuela, Manuel Rodriguez Pumarol.

Children affected by emergencies face heightened risks of psychological distress, violence, neglect, exploitation and family separation which compounds risk to their safety and wellbeing. Overcrowded conditions, disruption to routine and prolonged uncertainty can further increase these risks, particularly for the most vulnerable children.

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Portugal's last circus elephant is rehomed

Portugal's last circus elephant Julie has taken her first steps as the very first resident at Pangea Elephant Sanctuary. After leaving Africa nearly 40 years ago, Julie is now exploring her new surroundings at her own pace, across acres of natural habitat, with the expert care she needs.



Source: [Euronews](#)

Photo: Canva

Youth Opportunities

07.08.2026 - #NotOnOurFeed Contest

Young people across the EU are invited to create digital content tackling

cyberbullying and inspiring positive change online

16.08.2026 - UNESCO global youth hackathon

Young people worldwide are invited to build solutions to tackle online challenges like AI, disinformation, and hate speech.

And many more on Eurodesk

If you have come this far means that you are really interested in these topics, if you wish to contribute to our coverage, don't hesitate to contact us at team@greenovate.online

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