

# TRACE 2023

8-13 May, Coimbra, Portugal

## Book of Abstracts

# WELCOME

Welcome to TRACE 2023, held in the University of Coimbra, Portugal, and organized by the Dendrochronological lab, MedDendro. The MedDendro lab was founded in 2005, a baby compared with the age of the University of Coimbra, founded in 1290. The MedDendro lab has several research lines, from studying the climate-growth relations of Mediterranean tree species, to the ecological meaning of intra-annual density fluctuations, xylogensis of conifers, impact of drought on the physiology and growth of trees, and more recently, on archaeological and historical woods.

Associated with the celebration of the 250 years of the Botanical Garden of the University of Coimbra, the MedDendro lab prepared an exhibition about wood anatomy, called INSIDE OUT, that you can visit during the TRACE conference.

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## **Dendroarchaeology in Greece - from humble beginnings to promising future**

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It was back in the early 1960s when Bryant Bannister recognized the dendrochronological potential of Greece. More than two decades later, in the late 1980s, P.I. Kuniholm, together with C.L. Striker, started collecting and analyzing tree-ring series from several historical buildings, forests, and archeological sites in Greece and the surrounding Aegean region. Despite highly promising results compiled especially from the northern and western parts of the country, dendroarchaeology did not attract much attention in the coming decades. It was only by the end of 2000s dendroarchaeology was reintroduced; first in Crete through the Cretan Dendrochronology Project, launched by T. Ważny, J. Moody, and O. Rackham, and then by another independent project concerning the restoration of a historical building on the Euboea island, where the architect in charge, E. Tsakanika collaborated with T. Ważny to date a Venetian building and reveal its different phases of construction. Such isolated case studies became much more common over the last five years within the framework of the Balkan-Aegean Dendrochronology Project: «Tree-Ring Research for the Study of SE-European and East Mediterranean Civilizations» (BAD project). Dendroarchaeological surveys have been conducted both in historical buildings and archeological sites throughout Greece with an emphasis on regions previously ignored, such as the southern part of the country and the islands. Priority was also given to buildings under restoration, since in such cases original timbers were usually much more accessible and the architects and archaeologists in charge were more willing to collaborate. Our goals were not just to date available timbers or provide information about the species used or the possible origin of the wood, but also to help end-users realize the importance of this information and how dendroarchaeology can contribute to the reconstruction of the local history and the protection of cultural heritage. Meanwhile, the analyzed tree-ring series permitted us to develop new, well-replicated chronologies that may be used as references for further dating of historical timber in the future and for applications of tree-ring research in other fields such as environmental studies. The BAD project will end in 2023, but our interest to explore what old timber can tell us about environment and human past will continue.

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