



## Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum

Friday May 26th

### Forum Declaration 2017 “Cultural Tourism, a key to Sustainable Development”

We, the participants of the First Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum, held in the city of Serres, Greece, from 25 to 26 May 2017, express our willingness and readiness to actively promote cultural tourism, as a key to sustainable development for the benefit of all peoples in the Balkans and Black Sea region.

Our region is rich in diverse cultural heritage, possessing vibrant creative forces and the capacity to build on a wide and positive experience in stimulating growth through the protection of the distinctive natural and human-made landmarks abundant in our region.

Through the promotion of Cultural Tourism we aim to strengthen the protection of cultural heritage, streamline and facilitate its promotion and stimulate inter-cultural dialogue, prosperity, peace and stability, through an increased support to cultural production, education, research and science.

In this framework, we are ready to contribute to the formulation of a Master Plan for the promotion of Cultural Tourism, with the aim to create a practical platform for **connecting destinations** in the Balkans and Black Sea region and provide to the cultural and creative industries an environment allowing them to continue expanding, creating growth and increasing employment. The adoption of such a Master Plan and its implementation process will further facilitate the enhancement of interaction between Government officials, regions, entrepreneurs, academia, NGO's and, last but not least, young people, providing fresh incentives for exchanges, common projects and initiatives.

We express our gratitude and appreciation to the hosts and organizers of the First Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum for their hospitality and excellent organization of the events and renew our promise to continue working together to promote Cultural Tourism in a manner meeting our mutual expectations – increasing sustainability, performance and quality of life.

May 26<sup>th</sup> 2017, Serres | Greece

<p>Official Partner Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation</p>		<p>Strategic Partners</p>	<p>Black Sea Trade &amp; Development Bank</p> 	 <p>CPMR CRPM</p>	 <p>EBF European Business Federation</p>
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