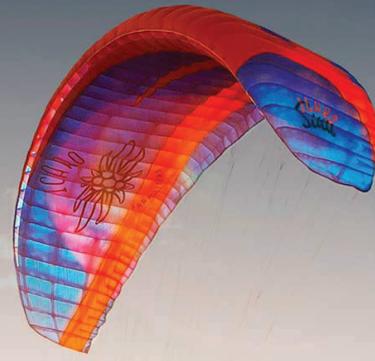


Western Balkans Ministerial Conference

# Lifting Barriers for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Western Balkans



12 May 2022-hybrid event (Tirana)

Venue: Mak Albania Hotel, Sheshi Italia,  
1001 Tirana – Albania

## 11 May 2022

19.00 – 20.00

### Welcome dinner/official

Participants from the Ministerial conference

## 12 May 2022

09.30 – 10.00

### Arrival of participants and registration

10.00 – 10.45

### Introductory remarks

Ms. Majlinda Bregu, RCC Secretary General

H.E. Ms. Mirela Kumbaro, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Albania

Mr. Erion Veliaj, Mayor of Tirana, Albania

Mr. Alexis Hupin, Acting Head of the European Delegation to Albania

10.45 – 11.45

### Panel 1: Standing in the face of COVID 19 adversity

COVID19 had immense effects on the tourism industry – from deep recession in 2020 to a notable recovery in 2021; despite the past season's pick-up, and minding the unpredictable ending of the pandemic, it is still clear that efficient crisis planning is needed. The panel will discuss the impact of implemented measures, as well as those that still need to be undertaken in order to address the ongoing effects of the pandemic on tourism. Recommendations from this panel will serve as a starting point for the work of the Western Balkans Tourism Crisis and Recovery Committee.

H.E. Ms. Tatjana Matic, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication, Serbia  
Ms. Aleksandra Gardasevic-Slavuljica, Director General for Tourism Developing Policies, Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism, Montenegro  
Ms. Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, Secretary General WB6 CIF  
Ms. Alessandra Priante, Director - Regional Department for Europe at World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

*Moderator:* Mr. George Tziallas, Regional Director for Europe and North Africa at World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)

**11.45 – 12.45**

**Panel 2: Improving business climate for sustainable investments in tourism**

The panel will review the state of play in tourism investments in the region, and bring to the light the main issues and recommendations on improving business environment so as to attract more sustainable investments in tourism. Since seamless travel & transport are among the most important investment criteria, the panel will also consider measures for removing administrative travel barriers for adventure tourism.

H.E. Mr. Kreshnik Bektashi, Minister of Economy, North Macedonia  
H.E. Mr. Stasa Kosarac, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Mr. Mladen Grgic, Director, Montenegrin Investment Agency  
Mr. Zdravko Ilic, Senior Trade Expert, CEFTA Secretariat

*Moderator:* Ms. Sanja Miovcic, Foreign Investors Council Bosnia and Herzegovina

**12.45 – 13.30**

**Lunch**

**13.30 – 14.30**

**Panel 3: Improving human capital competence in tourism**

Modern tourism demands continuous improvement of skills tailored to the needs of tourism industry. The panel will reflect on the main challenges in skills supply and discuss the important topic of skills & diplomas recognition, as well as developing common occupational standards in the region's tourism. Improvement of digital skills as one of the prerequisites for operating on contemporary tourism markets will be considered, along with the means of increasing participation of youth in tourism employment, ultimately preventing brain-drain.

H.E. Ms. Rozeta Hajdari, Minister of Trade and Industry, Kosovo\*  
Ms. Tina Saric, Director, ERISEE  
Mr. Robert Dee, Co-Director, New Deal Europe  
Ms. Nikolina Kovacevic, founder, Montenegro Luxury Association

*Moderator:* Mrs. Aleksandra Drinic, Tourism Development Expert, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**14.30 - 15.30**

**Panel 4: Innovation and creativity in service to tourism and vice-versa**

Coping with the requirement of the modern tourism market and emerging trends in creative industries demands innovative solutions. This session will seek synergies with innovative and creative industries as an added value to regional tourism development. The session will seek added value from other - innovative and creative sectors - with the goal of leveraging creative potential of the region into tourism development, promotion and ultimately - valorisation.

Mr. Dusan Kasalica, Movie director, Montenegro, The Heart of Sarajevo Award winner

Mr. Mak Muranovic, Young Sarajevo Street Art & Graffiti tour guide

Ms. Anisa Iloja, 'Walking Tours on Sustainable Cultural Heritage in Tirana'

*Moderator:* Mr. Martin Cuff, Creative industry expert

*(Coffee to be served during discussion)*

**15.30 - 15.45**

**Conclusions and next steps**

The platform will assemble the conclusions of the previous panels, discuss the next steps and agree on planned activities for this year under the framework of the Common Regional Market Agenda of the Western Balkans.

**16.00 - 17.30**

Regional Cooperation Council

Sightseeing Tour through Tirana City Center for all participants (to be led by local young tour guide)

