

**PLOVDIV DECLARATION
OF THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF CULTURE OF THE MEMBER STATES
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

Plovdiv, 14 June 2019

We, the Ministers in charge of Culture and Heads of Delegations of the *Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation* (BSEC) Member States, having met in Plovdiv, on 14 June 2019,

Recalling all the Statements and Declarations adopted hitherto by the Ministers in charge of Culture of the BSEC Member States, and ***taking note*** of the activities of the BSEC Working Group on Culture carried out since its inception,

Considering our participation in this meeting as an expression of our commitment to strengthening the spirit of cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding between our countries and peoples, as well as an opportunity to reaffirm our strong will to preserve the richness and diversity of our cultural heritage,

Acknowledging that cultural heritage in all its diversity and forms - tangible and intangible, immovable and movable, digital and digitised - is a value in its own right, an inheritance from our past and a strategic resource for the sustainable future of our countries, helping to respond to social, environmental and economic challenges. A considerable part of this value is related to the integration of cultural heritage as a strategic resource for the achievement of the objectives of other policies,

Recalling that training, education and communication, in particular among young people, play a fundamental role in citizens' awareness about the importance of cultural preservation and promotion,

Noting that cultural heritage globally is increasingly subject to various transnational risks of damage or destruction which requires the implementation of common and coordinated initiatives,

Underlining the importance of the new trends in international culture relations which pave new ways for partnerships, strengthen the cooperation and develop synergies with the UNESCO and other international organizations normative tools and programs,

Have agreed to:

Enhance our collaboration in the field of protection and promotion of cultural heritage on a broader, regional scale, in line with the spirit of dialogue and common interest,

Exchange good practices on how to bring cultural heritage to the fore within the other sectoral policies and to promote awareness among stakeholders about the mutual benefits of its mainstreaming into these policies as a long-term, non-renewable resource for national, regional and local development which maximize its social and economic benefits,

Identify and facilitate the exchange of good national and international practices through promoting mobility for professionals from the cultural heritage sector in the BSEC region,

Deepen and broaden the dialogue between all parties concerned, including the civil society organizations, citizens and particularly young people, in formulating and implementing policies to enhance further the principle of participatory governance of cultural heritage with a view of achieving deeper understanding of the contribution of cultural heritage for the development at national and regional level, in line with the BSEC Member States' national legislations,

Foster creation of regional cooperation networks among researchers, professionals and educational and training institutions in the BSEC region, with a view to promote and to share high quality skills, training and knowledge transfer in the traditional and emerging heritage professions,

Continue to support implementation of common activities in cultural heritage field as an important element in international cultural relations as well as in the promotion of the intercultural dialogue,

Increase the exchange of good practices on digitisation of cultural heritage as a tool for open access to culture and knowledge, thus stimulating innovation, creativity and participatory governance of cultural heritage,

Expand to a higher degree cooperation not only between our Members States, but also with UNESCO and other international organizations on issues of common interest in the policies and practices of cultural heritage, including on issues related to the offenses regarding cultural goods, in particular illicit trafficking of cultural property. Creation of a BSEC Network of Experts on Cultural Heritage issues could contribute to this end.

Instruct the BSEC Working Group on Culture to create the necessary conditions to enhance the cooperation on the abovementioned issues.

We express our gratitude to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria for the organization of this Meeting.