

BALKAN FORUM

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE
BALKANS IN THE POST COVID ERA

THESSALONIKI
24-25/9/2021

2nd Session

**Smart practices in cross-border cooperation
with tourism-agri-food and
development footprint for the citizens of the
Balkans**

**Tourism as a factor of sustainable development
and the transnational cooperation of the
Balkan countries**

Dr Athanasios Balermipas
General Secretary for Citizenship

ECONOMY

✓ Real GDP growth over 5% for 2021

✓ Tourism growth 230,3% in July 2021 in comparison to July 2020

(Source: The Hellenic Statistical Authority, ELSTAT)

TOURISM

Sustainable development

"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"

(World Tourist Organization)

TOURISM

Tourist development of small countries requires

- transnational cooperation
- regional integration
- economic convergence

TOURISM

so as to have

- ✓ great scale economies
- ✓ growth of structural competition
- ✓ cost production reduction

Cooperation problems in the Balkan countries



Cooperation problems in the Balkan countries

- Lack of common administrative mechanisms and financial tools
- Several Balkan countries are not EU members
- Bulgaria is not an EMU member

Troubleshooting tools

Taxation
adjustment

- Direct and indirect taxes

Fixed track
networks
interconnection

- Adjustment of pricing practices and itineraries

Development policy EU tools

- NSRF 2021-2027
- EU Recovery and Resilience Fund

The EU invests billions of Euros in pre-accession aid in

- transportation
- energy
- green and digital transition

- ✓ European Investment Bank
- ✓ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- ✓ World Bank
- ✓ OECD



Ways of promoting cross border cooperation

- Market integration policies by reducing integration barriers
- Promotion of a single digital market
- Motivation increase for greater economies of scale and transnational enterprises cooperation
- Creation of an integrated market for tourist products

- Establishment of a joint workgroup consisting of co responsible Ministries executives and members of the business community
- The objective is to submit an integrated strategic plan of trans Balkan cooperation

Examples of possible cooperation

- ❖ Cities with citadels in the Balkan countries
(creation of tourist routes/branding)
- ❖ Medical tourism
- ❖ Religious tourism

Cities with citadels



Medical tourism



Religious tourism

