

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM**  
**IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

**We, the Western Balkan participants referred to collectively as “the Contracting Parties” and individually “the Contracting Party”,**

In order to expand the strong and stable people-to-people relations in the Western Balkans, facilitate economic development and increase the potential of tourism, and to also establish a single market for tourism services, based on cultural similarities,

In order to protect and promote the cultural and historical heritage, tradition, and development of such values but at the same time respect the diversity of cultures and tourism services of each Contracting Party,

In order to assess the importance of tourism as an efficient mechanism for regional development, which contributes to the sustainability of tourist destinations in the context of the new concept of integrated, economic, social, and environmental tourism,

In order to promote and develop regional cooperation in terms of tourism as well as cultural and historical development, promoted not only in the Balkans but also beyond,

In order to enable the formation of a tourism map called "Open Balkan", based on mutual benefits,

Inviting the other Western Balkan participants to join this agreement in the spirit of inclusiveness, with **a view to promote productive cooperation in the field of tourism within the region,**

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

The Contracting Parties shall commit to the strengthening and enhancement of cooperation in the field of tourism on the basis of equal positioning and mutual benefit and pursuant to the applicable laws of the Contracting Parties and to applicable international agreements.

Article 2

In order to deepen the cooperation and promote tourism, the Contracting Parties shall contribute to the establishment of contacts among their tourism associations, organizations, tour operators, and travel agencies.

The Contracting Parties, upon the establishment of special workgroups, commit to the identification of the legal framework in the field of tourism and to also initiate efforts for the approximation of their laws with the aim of a reciprocal adaption to the system of tourist operators.

### Article 3

The Contracting Parties, pursuant to their domestic laws, shall promote the creation of favorable conditions for attracting investments in the tourism industry and exchange of information on investment conditions in the area of tourism, as well as investment projects.

The Contracting Parties agree to promote and encourage cooperation between their associations, agencies, organizations, and tourism institutions, in order to expand the tourism services, increase the benefits for the local population of the region, and create joint promotional campaigns for remote countries.

The Contracting Parties engage in the organization of joint tourism activities such as fairs, conferences, and cooperation forums, aimed at encouraging the sustainable development of regional tourism, as well as the promotion of cross-cultural tourism and traditions between the Contracting Parties.

### Article 4

The Contracting Parties undertake joint initiatives aimed at promoting new local and regional tour itineraries including a wide range of categories such as cultural, natural, sports, historical, rural, adventure, and trade tours, combining cultural heritage, cuisine, and handicrafts, enriching and benefiting from the tourist flow in the Western Balkans.

The Contracting Parties shall seek to exchange advertising and information materials about their tourism potential, as well as the following information in the area of tourism:

- normative acts and other legal rules that regulate tourist activities;
- strategic plans and programs for the development of the tourism industry;
- domestic legislation for the protection of natural resources and preservation of historical and cultural heritage sites, which are tourist attractions;
- statistical data in the area of tourism;
- promotion of the competitiveness and sustainable development of tourism;

- exchange of experience in the field of improvement of tourism services and security;
- exchange of experience in the field of management of facilities that represent tourist services.

The Contracting Parties agree to the expansion of marine, river and lake tourism being considered the main gate of regional tourism.

The Contracting Parties also agree to work on the unification of border-crossing practices in accordance with domestic and international standards.

#### Article 5

In order to monitor the implementation of this Memorandum and the activities implemented in accordance with its provisions, and also for the assessment of the results of its implementation, the **Contracting** Parties shall establish a Joint Working Group for Cooperation in the Area of Tourism.

The Working Group shall regularly meet at each Party, at a pre-arranged venue and date.

The Working Group shall include representatives of Contracting Parties' official institutions, representatives of tourist chambers, associations, and organizations, as well as representatives of the academic community. The representative should be, at the very least, at the level of the head of the department. Each Contracting Party shall notify to the other Contracting Parties the names of the representatives appointed to the Working Group. The Contracting Parties may also appoint deputy representatives at any time, by notifying the other Contracting Parties in writing.

The Working Group shall make biannual arrangements for joint activities and shall monitor their implementation.

#### Article 6

Any dispute arising out of the interpretation or implementation and/or application of any provision of this Memorandum shall be settled by mutual agreement on the basis of mutual consultation and negotiation among the Contracting Parties.

#### Article 7

Each Contracting Party may request a written amendment to all or part of this Memorandum through agreed channels of communications. Any amendment agreed among the Contracting Parties shall be implemented in writing and shall form part of this Memorandum of Understanding.

## Article 8

This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the date of its signing by the Contracting Parties.

This Memorandum shall remain in force until one of the Contracting Parties notifies the other Contracting Parties of its intention to terminate it, by written notification six months in advance, through agreed channels of communications.

The termination of this Memorandum shall not affect the fulfillment of the ongoing projects agreed on the basis of this Memorandum, which shall continue in accordance with the terms of this Memorandum.

Done in Ohrid, on June 8, 2022, in 3 original copies, in the English language.

**ON BEHALF OF THE  
MINISTRY OF TOURISM OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

**ON BEHALF THE MINISTRY  
OF ECONOMY OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF NORTH  
MACEDONIA**

**ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTRY  
OF TRADE, TOURISM AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**