

# The Tourism 4.0 for the Black Sea (T4BS) High-Level Forum

Tourism, Digitalisation and Sustainable development for the Black Sea

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**The Tourism 4.0 for the Black Sea (T4BS) High-Level Forum - Tourism, Digitalisation and Sustainable development for the Black Sea, successfully took place as a hybrid event on November 18, 2021, at the Crystal Palace in Ljubljana, Slovenia.**

The event featured prominent speakers including Valentina Superti, Director of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), and presented findings of the T4BS project, running since 2019, and promoted by Arctur, HCL Management, Sano Touring Experience, NGO Agricola, Ovidius University of Constanta, Tourism Institute and co-funded by the European Union.

Project T4BS explores the European pathway towards a resilient and competitive tourism ecosystem, sustainable tourism destinations and services, and digitalisation of tourism with respect to the EU Green Deal and the Digital Decade.

A key success factor is a digitalisation. The forum primarily focused on the presentation of data gathered and how data can be leveraged towards this goal, including Big data, for example also from satellites, as well as good practices of data sharing.

The following key challenges were addressed in a highly interactive panel session:

- Lack of data-sharing among players to support data-enabled solutions.
- Low level of digitalisation of tourism destinations.
- An insufficient knowledge base of the tourism ecosystem (monitoring, identification of data sources, data leveraging).

To successfully tackle these challenges the Tourism 4.0 for the Black Sea (T4BS) Declaration was formed and formally presented at the event. The T4BS Declaration aims to strengthen the collaboration between tourism stakeholders in the Black Sea region for building a more resilient, sustainable, digitally empowered and innovative tourism in the region. It is supported under the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea and identifies concrete actions for building a stronger Tourism 4.0 approach across the Black Sea.

Key ones are:

- Promoting a greater and more effective digitalisation of tourism
- Establishing permanent mechanisms for the systematic collecting of data
- Promoting access to and usage of advanced data sources (eg. space data)

- Promoting the use of advanced technologies and tools for the needs of holistic management of tourism
- Encouraging activities and projects that include at the forefront and among performance indicators cooperation between stakeholders

Speakers and panellists from a variety of institutions included Carl Hartzell, Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Georgia, Laszlo Borbely, State Counsellor to the Prime Minister in the Government of Romania, Rositsa Stoeva, Executive Manager in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) PERMIS, Peter Janech, Deputy Director of the Regional Department for Europe of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), George Tziallas, Regional Director for Europe and Africa for the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), Patrizia Busolini, Policy Officer from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime affairs and fisheries (DG MARE), Agnieszka Kempny, Project manager from the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), Stavros Kalognomos, Executive Secretary, Balkan and Black Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), Irakli Koplatadze, Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia, and the project promoters.

*"Project Tourism 4.0 for the Black Sea is an important contribution towards achieving the green and digital transition for the tourism ecosystem, for the Black Sea and beyond. [...] We need to develop, use and share better data."*

**Valentina Superti**, Director, DG GROW, European Commission

*"The conference will help elevate everyone's understanding of the potential of digital tourism, and lay the ground for a stronger, more connected, and diverse tourism sector through the means of modern technology."*

**Carl Hartzell**, Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Georgia

*"The Tourism 4.0 for the Black Sea project is an ice-breaker in the field of tourism, and will influence much more than this project."*

**Tomi Ilijas**, CEO Arctur

## T4BS

The T4BS High-Level Forum is promoted as part of the **Tourism 4.0 for Black Sea (T4BS) project funded by the EU through the European Maritime and Fishery Fund (EMFF)**. The project strives to enable local tourism stakeholders from the public and private sectors to increase their understanding of current digitalisation trends, patterns of tourist flows, and impact of visitors, as well as predict the tourist impact of strategic, data-driven decisions. The aim is to foster more sustainable tourism in the future. For more information, contact: [sabina.zelinscek@arctur.si](mailto:sabina.zelinscek@arctur.si)



Links:

T4BS project:

<https://www.t4bs.eu/en/latest-news/2021112118323898/tourism-40-the-black-sea-t4bs-highlevel-forum--tourism,-digitalisation-and-sustainable-development-for-the-black-sea/>

T4BS Declaration:

<https://www.t4bs.eu/en/t4bs-declaration/>

Social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/tourism4bs>

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/tourism4bs>

<https://twitter.com/Tourism4BSea>