

Doc. GA42/CC41/REP/13

**CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**REPORT\***

**on**

**“TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE –  
CHALLENGE OF LINKING CULTURAL AND TOURIST ROUTES  
IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE BLACK SEA REGION”**

**Rapporteur: Ms. Olena NETETSKA**  
PABSEC Vice President in Charge of Financial Matters  
Head of the PABSEC Ukrainian Delegation

---

*\* Text was considered and adopted by the Forty-First Meeting of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee in Tbilisi on 17 December 2013 and approved by the Forty-Second General Assembly in Tbilisi on 18 December 2013*

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Culture and tourism are both important areas of cooperation in the framework of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. Incorporation of culture in tourism activities within and outside the BSEC region is one of the general objectives of the Member States, along with the promotion of intercultural dialogue, protection of cultural diversity, promotion of the cultural identity of the BSEC Region and protection of the cultural and natural heritage.

2. The Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC, acknowledging the important role that cooperation in the spheres of cultural heritage and tourism holds in the process of reaching the objectives of the Organization, has adopted numerous Reports and Recommendations on cultural and tourism issues, such as:

- Recommendation 3/1994 on *Ratification and Implementation of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science, and Information*;
- Recommendation 6/1994 on *Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the PABSEC Member Countries*;
- Recommendation 18/1996 on *Guidelines on the Program for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in the Black Sea Region*;
- Recommendation 32/1999 on *The Development of Tourism in the Black Sea Region*;
- Recommendation 70/2003 on *The Role of Culture in the Development of the BSEC Region*;
- Recommendation 80/2004 on *Preservation and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage of the BSEC Member States*;
- Recommendation 75/2004 on *Sustainable Development of the Tourism Industry*;
- Recommendation 83/2005 on *Cooperation in the Sphere of Cultural Tourism in the Black Sea Region*;
- Recommendation 86/2005 on *Cultural, Educational, and Social Aspects of EU Enlargement: Consequences for the Black Sea Region*;
- Recommendation 89/2006 on *Dialog among Cultures as a Means to Build Trust among the Nations*;
- Recommendation 93/2006 on *The Process of Globalization and the Potential Threat to Cultural Diversity*; and
- Recommendation 119/2010 on *Cultural Cooperation in the BSEC Region: Experiences, Opportunities, and Challenges*.

3. During the general debate of the 41<sup>st</sup> PABSEC General Assembly held in Sofia, on 9-11 July 2013, the speakers stressed that in a period of economic crisis, tourism could represent an important platform of cooperation for the BSEC Member States and underlined its potential role in post crisis recovery in terms of jobs, infrastructure, trade and development.

4. The PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee decided to focus on a topic that touches upon cultural tourism, namely “Tangible and intangible cultural heritage - challenge of linking cultural and tourist routes in the countries of the Black Sea region” as the main item of the Agenda of its 41<sup>st</sup> Meeting, to be held in Tbilisi, on 17 December 2013. Contributions to the Report were received from the national delegations of Armenia, Greece, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. Reference material was also obtained from the official

websites of UNESCO, UNWTO, EU, Council of Europe, OECD and other relevant international organizations.

## II. CULTURAL ROUTES AND CULTURAL TOURISM IN THE BSEC REGION

### **The role of cultural routes in the protection and valorization of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the development of tourism**

5. Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets. Culture and creative industries are increasingly being used to promote destinations and enhance their competitiveness and attractiveness. Many locations, countries and regions are now actively developing their tangible and intangible cultural assets as a means of developing comparative advantages in an increasingly competitive tourism marketplace, and to create local distinctiveness in the face of globalization. At the same time, tourism provides an important means of enhancing culture and creating income which can support and strengthen cultural heritage, cultural production and creativity.

6. According to a Eurobarometer survey of 2009 on the attitudes of Europeans towards tourism, most Europeans prefer to spend their holidays in conventional tourist destinations (or at least what they consider as “traditional” or “well-known” destinations, 54%). However, about half as many, 28% would rather go “off the beaten track” and explore less obvious tourist targets, which are also referred to as “emerging” destinations. Tourists are more and more looking for true experiences, for meeting and getting to know other people and other cultures. Tourism policies will need to adapt to these trends and develop a quality offer promoting local cultures and traditions and paying attention to sustainable aspects such as preservation of the heritage, the landscape and the local culture.

7. The cultural heritage of the BSEC countries constitutes an invaluable resource for sustainable cultural, economic and social development. With its rich cultural and linguistic diversity and wealth of natural resources, the Black Sea region offers huge opportunities for leisure, tourism and genuine experiences, particularly through an innovative approach to cultural tourism.

8. The UNESCO World Heritage List includes 93 sites forming part of the cultural and natural heritage of the BSEC region while more than 160 are included in the tentative list. At the same time, the UNESCO List of intangible cultural heritage includes 27 cultural practices and expressions of intangible heritage of the BSEC region.

9. The historical links and axes of inter-cultural dialogue and exchange of ideas, beliefs, knowledge and skills, as well as cultural goods and expressions, have created a unique network of cultural routes in the Black Sea region, which are to be identified, preserved, sustainably used and promoted.

10. Cultural Routes crossing several countries are a good means to promote the variety and complexity of the Black Sea region’s cultural tourism offer. Cultural routes have a strong tourism potential, still mostly unexplored. They also have the potential to be a sustainable and social model, because they build on local knowledge, skills and heritage assets. Moreover, they often promote lesser known destinations, most of them in rural areas, thus helping to

combat the tourist concentration in few sites, as well as seasonality. The development of cultural routes may also strengthen the regional identity through the discovering of the BSEC region's common heritage and the promotion of cultural links and dialogue within the region as well as with other regions. Finally, cultural routes may strengthen and expand the experience of cultural exchange and tourism through the involvement of different networks and associations, local and regional authorities, universities and professional organizations.

### **Investing in the Black Sea region's intangible cultural heritage**

11. While the monuments of tangible cultural heritage are better known and promoted, the richness of the region's intangible cultural heritage has a yet unexplored potential of attracting cultural tourists. Performing arts like polyphonic singing, dance and music such as the Albanian folk iso-polyphony, the Bulgarian Bistriza-Babi Archaic Polyphony and the Georgian polyphonic singing; the Mevlevi Sema Ceremony (Turkey), Doina (Romania); Mugham and craftsmanship and performance art of the Tar (Azerbaijan), craftsmanship and performance art of the Duduk (Armenia), are only some examples of potential themes of respective cultural routes. This could be the case also with the great variety of folk arts and crafts, among which: the art of making earthenware pottery in Horezu (Romania), the traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet weaving, production of stone crosses called Khachkars (Armenia), the Russian Gzhel ceramics, Zhostovo painting, Palekh miniature, Khokhloma painting, Vologda lace, bone, wood and stone carving and many others. The vast, unexplored variety of languages of the region, many of them nearly vanishing, could constitute another theme of cultural route.

#### Culinary tourism

12. Food is an increasingly important part of tourism experiences, and food cultures of the Black Sea region are a rich source of cultural, economic and social diversity. Culinary heritage is now being valorized in different parts of the world, for example by the UNESCO designation of Mexican cuisine and Mediterranean diet (Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco) as Intangible World Heritage.

13. Food has a particularly important role in the development of tourist services, since it often comprises 30% or more of tourist expenditure and this money is regularly spent directly with local businesses. It is also argued that integrating food experiences into sustainable tourism development in rural and outlying areas may help ease poverty and rescue old traditions in the process of disappearing. Moreover, food can become unique element of the brand image of the Black Sea region and help to create distinctiveness. Cultural routes could be organized around the themes of the Mediterranean diet, Balkan and Caucasian cuisine, culinary traditions of Ukraine and Russia, etc.

### **Development in the cultural tourism sector and existing challenges**

14. During the last decade, in the context of the international developments regarding the improvement of the legal framework for the preservation of cultural heritage, the BSEC Member States have addressed issues of institutional capacity and improved the functions and responsibilities of institutions in this sphere. Modernization of tourism and cultural infrastructure was integrated in programs of social, economic and urban planning, road and transport infrastructure, as well as overall development programs. Moreover, comprehensive

programs have focused on the application of new technologies in the management of the objects of historical and cultural heritage so as to give due regard to the natural and historic landscape as a whole, while preserving the cultural environment. In this context for example, in 2010 the Historical and Cultural Museum-Reservation of Garni (Armenia) was awarded with the Melina Mercouri International Prize for Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes (UNESCO-Greece).

15. At present, cultural tourism in the BSEC region is developing quite intensively but rather unevenly. There is still a strong tourist attraction in the big cities, particularly the capital cities and historical centers. Notwithstanding the important progress made recently, many parts of the region still suffer from problems related to the development of the tourism sector as a whole, including also cultural tourism, such as: unfavorable economic conditions for attracting investments in tourism infrastructure; unfavorable conditions for the development of small and medium entrepreneurship that would ensure engagement of labour force, particularly of the local population, into the sphere of tourism; insufficiently developed tourism and transport infrastructures (small number of hotel facilities with up to date level of comfort, poor quality of roads, insufficient services in airports and seaports, etc.); shortage of qualified personnel, low level of maintenance and service; high cost of tours, accommodation, meals, transport and other tourism services; limited variety of tours, seasonality of the tourist destinations; shortage of modern transport facilities, including also cruise liners; insufficient marketing of the tourism products, both at the domestic and the international market.

16. Particularly regarding the development of cultural routes, the Member States are reporting several existing or potential challenges, including: the diversity of nations in the Black Sea region, which, along with its richness and tourist attraction capacity, may also represent a sensitive issue among the Member States in negotiating different aspects of cultural routes; the lack of a uniform legislative system; the lack of continuity in the representation of the experts involved in the work of the relevant Working Groups; the influence of political and economic factors on the sustainability and stability of initiatives; the frequent reorganization of the administrative systems, which causes delays in the accomplishment of objectives.

17. Moreover, an alarming trend within the general climate of the ongoing economic crisis is the decrease in financing of cultural heritage related projects as well as in the budgetary allocations dedicated to the functioning of museums and other cultural institutions. In this context, the need for invigorating local societies and small-scale economies calls for economic and social sustainability as a basic axis for drafting cultural policies.

### **Proposals for strengthening cooperation in the development and linking of cultural and tourist routes**

18. The promotion and development of cultural and tourist routes in the region would benefit first and foremost from national policies which take a wide approach to culture and tourism, with the aim to develop a successful synergy between these two sectors. For this purpose, adequate strategies need to be established, promoting an effective partnership between stakeholders in both sectors.

19. As well as partnership between culture and tourism, it is also important to build other forms of partnership, for example with other regions and between the public and private

sector. Links between regions can extend the cultural opportunities available to tourists and enhance the diversification of the tourism product. Working with the private sector is essential for attracting investment and continuing to improve the quality of both the cultural and tourism offer.

20. Improving the programs of training of highly specialized personnel for the tourism sector is essential for increasing the quality of provided tourist services. An example of efforts made in this direction is the initiative of the St. Petersburg University to establish an International University Consortium for preparing personnel for the tourism and hospitality industry. Elaboration and enhancement of networking technologies and the possibilities for more effective interaction between the members of the consortium, the communities of professionals in the field of tourism in the BSEC states and the national labor markets, as well as the creation of an integrated system of training of personnel working in the tourism industry and the academic staff are among the objectives of the consortium.

21. Cultural exchange in general should also be further expanded and intensified among the Member States: concert tours, exhibition activities, performances of amateur art groups and artists, fairs of art and craft products would increase the interest of regional and international tourists.

22. Facilitation of visa regimes between the countries of the Black Sea region would contribute significantly to the development of cultural tourism in the region while facilitating the overall cooperation among the BSEC Member States.

23. Finally, projects and ideas formulated in the BSEC framework could interact with similar projects of other regional initiatives. Such cooperation could be of mutual benefit for BSEC and other regional organizations and initiatives. Efforts for developing common projects should be intensified and focus more on making proper use of cross border cooperation operational programmes, such as the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme and the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme.

### III. COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL ROUTES WITHIN THE BSEC FRAMEWORK

24. The issues of Cultural Tourism / Cultural Routes have been for a long time on the agenda of both the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism and the BSEC Working Group on Culture.

25. The Ministers in charge of Culture of the BSEC Member States in the Statement adopted in Sounion, Athens in July 2007, focused, inter alia, on the “Reviving ancient routes and creatively developing new ones as vehicles for intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, good neighborhood relations and social cohesion”.

26. The Ministers in charge of Tourism of the BSEC Member States in the Declaration adopted in Athens (November 2010), encouraged “cooperation in the field of Special Interest Tourism, through existing or new projects, mainly, in the area of cultural tourism projects”. Furthermore, the “BSEC Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” (June 2012), representing the renewed strategy on short and long-term cooperation in the BSEC

region, “encourages Cultural tourism/Cultural routes projects in the Black Sea region and their implementation.”

27. The Plan of Action of the Working Group on Culture (2011-2012), envisages regarding the Cultural Routes, the following:

“Development of cultural routes and itineraries that are specific for the Black Sea region, in view of protecting the heritage of this area; maritime heritage – opportunities for regional co-operation between the BSEC Member States; awareness campaign focusing on the importance of the heritage of the wider Black Sea region and on the necessity to safeguard it; the sustainable use of heritage, by correlating the cultural actions of the various stakeholders involved (national and international), considering the social factor of the existent communities and the economic background that can provide support for the projects concerning cultural heritage; strengthening the regional collaboration in the field of intangible heritage, aiming at exploiting and preserving the folklore and the traditions of the Black Sea region; the necessity to have an interdisciplinary approach to the exploitation of cultural heritage, involving tourism, transportation, civil engineering etc.”

28. In order to avoid duplication and to achieve better coordination, joint meetings of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism and the BSEC Working Group on Culture were held so far on three occasions. At the first Joint Meeting (Istanbul, June 2009), several Member States made presentations on the projects open for joining in by other Member States. At the second Joint Meeting (Istanbul, September 2010), it was decided to establish a list of associated partner countries to the projects.

29. The Third Meeting held in Istanbul in October 2012, considered the following projects: a) “The Route of the Rose” (Republic of Bulgaria); b) “The Routes of Coinage” (Hellenic Republic); c) “The Route of the Roman Emperors” (Republic of Serbia); d) “The Silk Road” (Republic of Turkey); e) “Wine Routes of Azerbaijan” (Republic of Azerbaijan); f) “Vine and Wine Routes of Armenia” (Republic of Armenia); g) “The Legend of Argonauts” (Georgia); and h) “XIII Century Sailing Ship “Cilicia” (Republic of Armenia).

30. The Progress Report on the Planning and Implementation of the Cultural Routes/Cultural Tourism Projects, prepared by the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (September 2012), describes the state of affairs with regard to the project proposals as follows:

**(a) “The Route of the Rose” ( Bulgaria)**

31. The purpose of the Project is to make the information on the Rose more comprehensive and available using the knowledge of all partners intended to take part in the project at any time of its implementation according to the following thematic items:

- Geography of the Rose Culture, distribution area – history;
- The plant diversity of Rose species;
- Climatic and natural factors for the oleaginous Rose cultivating;  
Production and Application of the Rose products – cosmetics, foods, drinks, medicine, aromatherapy;
- Ethnography of the Rose plants growing;
- Ethnography of extraction of Rose oil, foods, drinks, medical practices on the basis of the Rose products during the different historical epochs;

- The symbol of Rose in the practice of the world cultures and religions; in the heraldic; in the philosophical doctrines; in the chivalry; and in the mysterious doctrines;
- The Rose in the intangible cultural heritage – folklore, songs, poetry, literature;
- The Rose in the decorative arts; flower arrangement; textile, national costumes, etc.;
- The Rose in the garden and park art of the nations;
- Dedication to the Rose in the world name system – male and female names;
- Festivals dedicated to the Rose;
- Institutions and associations of the productive and spiritual Rose culture.

Up to now, there were no associated partners to the Project.

**(b) “The Routes of Coinage” (Greece)**

32. The Project, proposed by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, aims at presenting various aspects of the private and public life in the Balkans and the Black Sea Region that coins are involved with. It will focus on linking economic, social and cultural aspects of various civilizations with numismatics, having as the focus of attention the Cost of Food. The Numismatic Museum of Athens addressed invitation letters for participation in the Project to the Numismatic Department of the National Museum of Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, and to the Byzantine Numismatic Collection of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation. In September 2010, the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Armenia expressed the willingness to join the Project. The Hellenic Republic informed that the Numismatic Museum of Athens is redesigning the Project “The Routes of Coinage” that will be shortly communicated to the BSEC Member States.

**(c) “The Route of the Roman Emperors” (Serbia)**

33. The main objective of the project is to contribute to the diversification of the European tourism offer by promoting cultural tourism through two Cultural Routes in the Middle and Lower Danube region (Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania) equally putting into perspective common but unique European heritage of the Roman period and wine culture enhancing the image of the area as a distinguished destination. It aims at strengthening territorial identity through trans-national cooperation among key tourism development organisations (from the public and the private sectors) setting the basis for a long-lasting trans-national and inter-sectoral cooperation of different stakeholders along the Route.

Expected results:

- To promote the role of cultural tourism as a factor for sustainable economic development, European citizenship and intercultural dialogue;
- To help the stakeholders to develop national/regional/local approaches and strategies in communication and promotion of Route’s complement to the Route’s trans-national character;
- Additional contribution to the achievement of outcomes of the tourism and culture pillar of the EU Danube Strategy;
- To set up the common understanding of Cultural Routes tourism and the knowledge about its potential for increasing tourism in the region in a sustainable manner.

34. The Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation within the Project on “*The Cultural Tourism Route of the Roman Emperors*” was signed among the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia (BSEC Observer), the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism of Romania and the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia, in Sremski Karlovci, Serbia, on 24 February 2012.

**(d) “The Silk Road” (Turkey)**

35. The main objectives of the Project are:

- Revival of the Silk Road in the Black Sea Region as a vehicle for cross-cultural exchange;
- Promotion and development of cultural tourism itinerary along the route Caucasus-Anatolia-Europe;
- Promotion, conservation and restoration of tangible cultural heritage in the region;
- Promotion of common intangible cultural heritage such as; feasts, culinary culture, etc.;
- Creation of employment opportunities through cultural tourism;
- Rehabilitation of physical infrastructure and improvement of social and cultural life conditions of local people.

36. The Republic of Armenia, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Moldova have joined the Project. The Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Albania have expressed the willingness to join. The Russian Federation expressed interest in the project. The BSEC Business Council also expressed interest in participating in the Project.

**(e) “Wine Routes of Azerbaijan” (Azerbaijan)**

37. The main objectives of the Project are:

- Promoting cultural and natural heritage of the regions of wine industry;
- Promoting wine as an evidence of cultural diversity of each country, as well as of the whole Region;
- Facilitation of tourist movements between the participating states;
- Developing local infrastructure.

Up to now, no associated partners have joined the Project

**(f) “Vine and Wine Routes of Armenia” (Armenia)**

38. The main objective of the Project is to assist to transnational exchange of products and services in the sphere of tourism, culture, winery and viticulture, develop interregional, cross-border Vine and Wine Routes tourism and through it to develop intercultural dialogue in the region. It aims at establishing sustainable, well planned and organized wine routes on the bases of the rich traditional, cultural and industrial resources of viticulture Armenia boasts.

The objectives of the project are:

- Promotion of wine tourism throughout Armenia;

- Maintenance and protection of cultural and historical heritage and natural and human resources;
- Increase of the number of tourists and visitors to the country;
- Fostering of wine-making and viticulture in Armenia, mainly aimed at SMEs;
- Decentralization of the tourism industry from the capital of the Republic to the rural communities creation of new jobs;
- Income generation;
- Enhancement of benefits to the local communities;
- Responsible participation of the local population to the process of preservation of natural, traditional and cultural resources.

Up to now, no associated partners have joined the Project.

**(g) “The Legend of Argonauts” (Georgia)**

39. The main objective of the Project is to create a cultural route by following the steps of the ancient legend of Argonauts (Kingdom of Colchis, Golden Fleece) and to discover the cultural heritage and tourism destinations in Georgia. Greece expressed willingness to join the Project.

**(h) XIII Century Sailing Ship “Cilicia” (Armenia)**

40. This project has been proposed to be considered within the framework of the proposal by the European Center of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments (Greece) on: “LIMEN. Cultural Ports from Aegean to the Black Sea”.

41. Moreover, Romania is currently examining the possibility of establishing more cultural routes concerning:

- Danube and Danube’s Delta;
- Cucuteni – Trypillian Culture (Romania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova);
- The beginnings of Christianity in the Black Sea Region (the chalk churches, the tombs of the first martyrs and the legend of Saint Andrew are relevant for Romania);
- Thracian heritage.

42. Ukraine is also preparing the project “Ottoman Times Fortresses (16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries)”, with the following objectives:

- Archaeological research of fortifications of the period of the Ottoman presence on the territory of Ukraine and the neighboring countries;
- Necessary restoration of monuments and their future exploitation with educational and research purposes;
- Their publicity and use as touristic resources;
- Preparation of the sites and monuments record for their inclusion into the UNESCO List of World Heritage.

43. The Ukrainian part of the project includes sites of defensive architecture of the Ottoman Empire, namely: **Akerman fortress** (*Bilhorod-Dniestrovsky fortress*), situated on the territory of the archaeological reservation of national significance – “Ancient city of Tyre- Bilhorod”; **Yeni-Kale fortress** (1703-1710), located in the city of Kerch (Autonomous Republic of Crimea); **Arabatska fortress** (ruins, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries) – it controlled the most important

trade and strategic road running from north through the modern town Henichesk towards Crimea. The monument is located in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea; **Turkish fortress of 18<sup>th</sup> century** - a part of the historical complex of the Khotyn fortress 13<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, located in the city of Khotyn (Chernivtsi region).

44. The countries, historical territories of which were under Ottoman rule, mainly the Danube and the Black Sea regions (Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, etc.) are invited to participate in this project.

45. In the process of examining the ways and means of implementing the above mentioned projects, certain issues have been identified, such as the need for further institutional involvement of BSEC and for financial assistance by the BSEC Project Development Fund and BSEC-Hellenic Development Fund. At the same time, combined efforts by the Member States are encouraged to further promote and implement the joint projects. More specifically, the preparation of “road maps” containing concrete steps to be taken and a time-frame for the implementation of the projects is expected by the respective Member States. Experience sharing with other international and regional organizations would also benefit the process of planning and implementation of the BSEC cultural routes projects.

#### IV. INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND EXPERIENCE

46. **UNESCO** renowned cultural conventions provide a unique global platform for international cooperation and establish a holistic cultural governance system based on human rights and shared values. These international treaties endeavour to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage including ancient archaeological sites, intangible and underwater heritage, museum collections, oral traditions and other forms of heritage, and to support creativity, innovation and the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors. In 1994, the World Heritage Committee launched the Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible **World Heritage List**. With its nomination as a World Heritage Site international interest and attention are brought to a monument. Consequently, this status also brings along particular effects for the regional tourism. The challenge is to pay attention to different factors such as cultural education, international interest, conservation and preservation of the monument as well as authenticity and consideration for traditions and customs of the community and region. Several cultural routes are also inscribed in the World Heritage List. Regarding the intangible cultural heritage, the **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** is made up of those intangible heritage elements that help demonstrate the diversity of this heritage and raise awareness about its importance.

47. The **World Tourism Organization Network (UNWTO)** designed the **Silk Road Programme** in order to enhance sustainable tourism development along the historic Silk Road route. It aims to maximize the benefits of tourism development for local Silk Road communities, while stimulating investment and promoting the conservation of the route's natural and cultural heritage. Additionally, it is working to foster greater cooperation between Silk Road countries and regions, with the established aim of creating a seamless and memorable Silk Road travel experience. The Silk Road Programme organises and supports a number of international and regional conferences, networking events and workshops for Silk Road stakeholders covering a variety of subjects, including: regional cooperation; product development and destination management; community-based tourism and heritage; marketing

and statistics; communications and media. The Silk Road Programme currently comprises 31 countries, among which 9 BSEC Member States: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine.

48. **The Cultural Routes programme** was launched by the **Council of Europe** in 1987. Its objective was to demonstrate, by means of a journey through space and time, how the heritage of the different countries and cultures of Europe contributes to a shared cultural heritage. The Cultural Routes put into practice the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, dialogue, mutual exchange and enrichment across boundaries and centuries. In December 2010, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/Res(2010)53 establishing an *Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA)* to enable closer co-operation between states particularly interested in the development of Cultural Routes. The *Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes* seeks to reinforce the potential of Cultural Routes for cultural co-operation, sustainable territorial development and social cohesion, with a particular focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values and the discovery of less well-known destinations. It helps to strengthen the democratic dimension of cultural exchange and tourism through the involvement of grassroots networks and associations, local and regional authorities, universities and professional organisations. It contributes to the preservation of a diverse heritage through theme-based and alternative tourist itineraries and cultural projects.

Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Russia and Serbia are members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes.

#### CoE cultural routes programs with the participation of BSEC member states:

*The Hansa* (Russia); *The Viking Routes* (Greece, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine); *The Phoenicians' Route* (Greece, Turkey); *The Routes of the Olive Tree* (Albania, Greece, Serbia, Turkey); *The Via Regia* (Ukraine); *Transromanica - The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage* (Serbia); *The Iter Vitis Route* (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania); *European Cemeteries Route* (Greece, Russia, Serbia).

#### **Regional initiatives and funding opportunities**

##### Council of Europe - Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme (Black Sea and South Caucasus)

49. The Kyiv Initiative brings together Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine with the aim to rebuild trust and confidence across the region. The programme focuses on five themes that both unite and characterise the participating countries – heritage management, film, the shaping of cultural policy, literature, wine culture and tourism exchange. Through a series of projects designed to encourage cross-border collaboration, the Kyiv Initiative enables the sharing of expertise and the development of competence and skills in both towns and the countryside. The Kyiv Initiative aims to show the added value of coordinated and inter-disciplinary planning across a range of key functions, including heritage and environmental protection, tourism, cultural development, education and economic development. The result is a wide range of activities, including vineyards and winemaking, contemporary and archival film, Alexander Dumas' journey through the Caucasus, and the restoration of historic town centres.

Council of Europe - Regional Programme on Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe (RPSEE)

50. This Regional Programme was launched in 2003 and covers, among others: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia. With its three components (institutional capacity building, heritage rehabilitation and local development), it aims at contributing to peace and reconciliation in a region undergoing complex political, legal, economic and social transition. Supported by the European Commission in several of the projects, the Regional Programme emphasizes the notion of "local development". If the Regional Programme originally focused mainly on post-conflict challenges in South-East Europe, it has shifted increasingly towards development processes. Based on a trans-national approach, it attaches particular importance to issues related to the multiple cultures and religions of the Balkans. Apart from its general objectives, the Regional Programme provides a global exchange of expertise and experience between neighbouring countries facing similar situations in the fields of protection, conservation, rehabilitation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage. Strong emphasis is placed on urban and rural management, democratic and participatory processes, and the improvement of living conditions and quality of life.

51. Through the *Pan-European Cultural Routes*, the European Commission is implementing a number of activities to support transnational tourism products based on specific themes which still have great potential for growth. In particular, it is intended to encourage the integration of SMEs into the tourism sector and to create opportunities for cooperation with tour operators, etc. The Commission has already co-financed several projects of cooperation and promotion of transnational thematic tourism products via three calls for proposals in 2011 and 2012. The Commission is also closely cooperating with the Council of Europe on cultural routes through a several-year joint management. More than 20 trans-national itineraries received certification from the Council of Europe. Moreover, the Commission undertook the organisation of the first European festival dedicated to cultural routes in the EU.

52. Of relevance to the countries covered by the Black Sea Synergy of the EU, the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2007-2013 (Black Sea JOP) is a programme under the European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The programme's three specific objectives are: 1.Promoting economic and social development in the border areas; 2.Working together to address common challenges; 3.Promoting local, people-to-people cooperation. The projects will be jointly submitted and implemented by partnerships that will always involve partners from one or several EU Member States (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania) and from one or several partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine) and Turkey. Among the priorities of the Black Sea JOP is supporting cultural and educational networks for the establishment of a common cultural environment in the Basin through promoting cultural networking and educational exchange in the Black Sea Basin communities.

53. Also in the field of cultural cooperation, the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme – Part I has been designed to strengthen regional cultural links and dialogue within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) East region, and between the EU and ENP Eastern countries' cultural networks and actors. It covers cooperation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Belarus from 2010 to 2013. The Eastern Partnership Culture Programme aims at assisting the partner countries in their cultural policy reforms at government level, as well as capacity-building and improving the professionalism of cultural

operators in the Eastern ENP region. It contributes to exchange of information and experience among cultural operators at a regional level and with the EU. The programme seeks to support regional initiatives which demonstrate positive cultural contributions to economic development, social inclusion, conflict resolution and intercultural dialogue. In October 2010, the European Union launched a call for proposals dedicated to the culture sector specifically for the Eastern Partnership region. As a result, 15 regional projects were selected and financed through the Eastern Partnership Culture Programme.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

54. The development of cultural and tourist routes has remarkable potential for economic, cultural and social growth in the BSEC region. Developing cultural and tourism policies could help to preserve and revive tangible and intangible cultural heritage, enhance economic development and employment, strengthen and diversify tourism products, retain the local population, develop cultural understanding.

55. Successful policies in this field are closely connected to the role of regional stakeholders, the leadership qualities of public sector stakeholders and the administrative arrangements for tourism and culture. Emphasis should be given to the promotion of cooperation between the tourism and cultural sectors, as well as between different levels of government and the private sector. Public-private partnerships are central in this cooperation process, notably to develop market-oriented culture and tourism products and to market these products to consumers.

56. Building on their great cultural and natural heritage assets and making use of national and international experience, the BSEC Member States can meet the challenge of linking cultural and tourist routes and raise awareness globally of the Black Sea region as a tourism destination of a unique value and quality.