

Declaration on Western Balkans Six Tourism Branding

We, the High-level representatives of the Western Balkans Six (WB6), together with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), gathered in _____, on ____ October 2025, in the framework of the Berlin Process and supported by the Regional Cooperation Council:

RECALLING one of the main goals of the Berlin Process to enhance regional economic cooperation and lay the foundations for sustainable growth;

REITERATING our commitment to the EU's Growth Plan for the Western Balkans and the Common Regional Market as its second pillar, which recognizes tourism as a key driver of inclusive, green and innovation-led growth;

IN LIGHT OF the commitment of the WB6, as laid down in the Common Regional Market Action Plan 2025 - 2028, to develop and support sustainable tourism policies and competitiveness;

RECOGNIZING the strategic value of a unified and distinctive regional tourism identity in strengthening the global visibility and competitiveness of the WB6 and attracting tourists as a unique destination rooted in culture, nature, and shared values;

DETERMINED TO ACT UPON tourism's potential to boost economic growth, social cohesion, regional balance, as well as its potential to improve the image of the WB6 in the EU and the world;

STRIVING to build a trusted and recognizable WB6 brand based on sustainability, digital and green transformation, regional integration and inclusivity;

ACKNOWLEDGING the rising demand for authentic, immersive, and experience-driven travel rooted in cultural richness, natural diversity, and the unique assets of the region - and the WB6's potential to meet this demand through a compelling brand and coordinated promotion;

RECOGNIZING that strong coordination, skilled professionals, cross-sector collaboration, and investment access are essential for building a resilient, modern tourism ecosystem;

HAVE TODAY AGREED TO TAKE MULTIPLE ACTIONS TO ADVANCE REGIONAL TOURISM BRANDING, AS FOLLOWING:

Develop and implement a unified, recognizable and unique tourism brand for the Western Balkans Six, to position the region as a coherent, high-value destination, increase global visibility, sustainably grow tourist arrivals and attract tourism investment.

Ensure consistent communication of the regional brand across all WB6 and international markets, by aligning messaging, visuals, and promotional efforts through digital platforms and joint participation in global tourism and investment fora.

Embed the principles of sustainability, innovation, and climate resilience into the regional brand, supporting the region's green and digital transformation and aligning with global sustainability standards.

Design and promote regional flagship products under the common brand, including regional thematic routes in culture, nature, gastronomy, and creative industries, to deepen regional storytelling, extend visitor stay, improve their knowledge and understanding of the region, and stimulate private-sector investment.

Invest in human capital development in support of the regional brand, by scaling regionally coordinated training in sustainability, digital tools, hospitality standards, and intercultural communication for tourism professionals.

Build and operate a shared digital ecosystem for regional tourism branding, integrating smart tourism tools, multilingual content, immersive technologies and real-time visitor data to strengthen engagement and support brand consistency.

Integrate the tourism brand into inter-sectoral development agendas, by aligning it with policies in culture, environment, mobility, green and digital transformation, and entrepreneurship to maximize impact and relevance.

Promote the WB6 as a forward-looking, brand-aligned destination, responding to evolving traveler preferences such as immersive, purpose-driven experiences, affordability, cultural richness, and flexibility for emerging segments - including remote workers and digital professionals.

Implement joint international outreach efforts under the brand, including coordinated participation in leading tourism exhibitions, global media partnerships, and collective campaigns that present WB6 as a single travel destination.

Ensure that the brand reflects and promotes social inclusion, by involving local communities, youth, women, and small enterprises in branding initiatives and ensuring equitable access to the opportunities it generates.

Mandate the Regional Cooperation Council as the strategic and technical lead for brand implementation, by creating and coordinating a Regional Branding Platform, that integrates with WB6 public and private sector tourism platforms, facilitates joint promotion efforts and marketing campaigns, harmonizes promotion strategies, engages tourism SMEs through capacity building programmes and reports on the branding process.

Call for partnerships - including the EU, international and regional organisations, donors and financial institutions - to mobilize financial and technical support, aligning investment with the strategic objectives of regional tourism branding and long-term sustainable growth, and **to support the establishment of a dedicated regional fund** for engaging WB6 tourism and creative industry stakeholders in brand promotion.