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## Press Release 4

### **WE TOUR “Black Sea: Women Entrepreneurship and Tourism – Empowering Women through Tourism”**

*The WE TOUR Project is to be finalized in the end of July, 2023*

Black Sea Women Entrepreneurship Connection - Empowering Women through Tourism (WETOUR – BSB1030) was approved for funding under the Joint Operational Programme “BLACK SEA BASIN 2014-2020”; and the Project started in July 2021. After 2 years of hard work and reaching out to the project goals with a great joy, the WE TOUR partners are proud to announce that the WE TOUR Project is to be finalized on 25th July, 2023.

WETOUR project aimed to create a cross-border business network in the Black Sea Basin area by strengthening, supporting and developing female entrepreneurship through tourism and providing women with new economic and social opportunities.

The project includes 5 partners from 5 different countries – 4 business women associations from Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia and Turkey and 1 tourism association from Armenia. Each partner has different roles in the business sector and have performed different responsibilities in the project implementation. Project partners joined efforts to develop innovative entrepreneurial framework for development of tourism and promotion of Black Sea macro region as an attractive touristic destination.

The WE TOUR project targeted the Promotion of Women’s Entrepreneurship through a strong partnership for a Network in the Black Sea Basin Area. The project partners from Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Turkey and Armenia; have created an entrepreneurial framework for development of tourism and promotion of Black Sea macro region as an attractive touristic destination. Every partner performed different roles and responsibilities during the project implementation duration of 2 years.

The project partners gathered for the first physical meeting, for a two-day kick-off meeting of the WETOUR project on November 22<sup>nd</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, in Thessaloniki – Greece. The project activities gained speed after the first physical meeting. During the project duration, each partner contributed to the development of training modules for the WE TOUR Project, held local trainings in their countries, held local and international activities for project promotion as well as for project management, kept in touch with a broad network of stakeholders and engaged with women who are in tourism business and women who wish to be in the tourism sector.

**Common borders. Common solutions.**



The WE TOUR Project has its own project website and 'WE TOUR Portal' as a separate website. Under 'WE TOUR Project' Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn pages are currently active and will be reachable after the completion of the project for the sustainability and reachability of the project results.

The Project finalization has been remarked with two main events: the International WeTour Conference, organized by the Greek Association of Women Entrepreneurs – SEGE on 21 – 22 June 2023, at the Grand Hotel Palace in Thessaloniki; and the online partners 'Final Meeting' held on 24th July 2023.

During the International conference held on 21 – 22 June 2023 in Thessaloniki with over 200 participants and distinguished guests from six different countries, attendees had the opportunity to discuss ways to empower female entrepreneurs in the Tourism industry. They listened to the experiences of female entrepreneurs who received support within the framework of the program and engaged in meetings to foster the growth and networking of their businesses.

The first day of the Conference started with the speech of the President of the Greek Association of Women Entrepreneurs (SEGE), Ms. Lina Tsaltampasi, welcoming and thanking the participants for their significant turnout. Greetings followed from the new Deputy Regional Governor for Tourism of Central Macedonia, Ms. Christina Goula, and the newly elected President of the Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Turkey - KAGIDER, Ms. Esra Bezircioğlu. The international two-day conference concluded with a Press Conference regarding the European project WE TOUR - & Black Sea Women Entrepreneurship Connection - Empowering Women.

With the WE TOUR project aiming at the cross-border collaboration, a specific program which is crucial for the development of Female Entrepreneurship particularly in the tourism sector has been created, women were trained and informed through local trainings, local events and meetings held within the project scope. A great interest and excitement were recorded by each partner association after delivering the trainings, and some participants asked for the future development of such activities. WE TOUR Project has created awareness, knowledge-sharing opportunities and networking among women; and the positive effects of the Project will keep expanding as the online platforms will be available to receive the same trainings online, as well as updating the news regarding tourism and relevant information. WE TOUR partners will pursue their dialogue to support women entrepreneurs and will keep sharing their best practices with the community.

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