

Dear readers of the Tourism and Recreation Magazine,



I am extremely pleased by the magazine to congratulate the Bulgarian entrepreneurs who participate in the TTR, Bucharest and Philoxenia, Thessaloniki tourism fairs from 13 to 16 November 2014, and all their future clients. I have no doubt that the interest in Bulgaria as a tourist destination will continue to grow.

The efforts of the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) in which the tourism sector is well represented, are invariably aimed at improving the conditions for doing business, expanding partnerships and successful career development, in tourism and related activities among others. The citizens of Greece and Romania, the host countries of TTR, Bucharest and Philoxenia, Thessaloniki tourism fairs, evidence of that with their presence in our resorts. Latest data show that Greece and Romania lead the rankings in international tourist arrivals in Bulgaria and the number of their tourists marks a significant growth as compared to 2013.

Our EU membership, our closeness as neighbouring countries, our heritage and natural resources make Bulgaria attractive not only for tourism and tourism activities between us, but also for a joint presentation in third markets. With regard to South-Eastern Europe the BCCI has already gained experience with traditional Balkan festivals of wine, and especially by means of the large-scale projects crucial to the development of tourism in the region as SAGITTARIUS and RECOLTIVATUR, implemented in the last three years. For example, under SAGITTARIUS (<http://www.see-tcp-project-sagittarius.eu/index.php/bg/>) the BCCI created the first mobile application in the field of tourism, including a virtual museum of 120 cultural and historical landmarks in South-East Europe, 20 of them from Sofia. The introduction of the young people to the common cultural values underlay the creation of the educational computer game based on the cultural heritage in South-East Europe. I invite you to walk around the virtual museum and try the computer game. Mobile applications are available in web stores for IOS and Android.

Under RECOLTIVATUR (<http://www.recoltatur.eu/>) we created a geographic information system, including 18,000 sites of a religious character in South-East Europe, of which 4000 sites are in Bulgaria. The developments and the results of the project are available to tour operators not only in South-East Europe.

I believe that the efforts of the BCCI and Bulgarian entrepreneurs will contribute to successful performance in TTR, Bucharest and Philoxenia, Thessaloniki, to tourism development and an increased interest in Bulgaria as a tourist destination and a good place for investment and business.

Tsvetan Simeonov
President of the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry