



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
MINISTER**

**STATEMENT  
BY THE MINISTER OF TOURISM  
OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,  
Mr Harry THEOHARIS**

Although deeply damaging to the tourism economy, the ongoing crisis has managed to capture the sector's reality, like a snapshot, highlighting its deficits but also the potential of solidarity and giving us time to reflect on the components we need to develop towards a stronger, more resilient and responsive tourism.

Digitalisation and sustainability have been the European mantras for the last few years, mainstreamed in every aspect of tourism policy; now safety takes a great leap, as the pandemic made clear it's imperative to ensure that the tourism sector is armored against any kind of possible future crisis, either health, climate, or other.

In these times of global turmoil, we need to set the example of making a decisive shift in the next 10-20 years. Enhancing our efforts for the digital transformation, adoption of sustainable production and consumption patterns, upskilling and reskilling of tourism workforce, while securing jobs, supporting tourism SMEs and assuring a safe and inclusive tourism experience are challenging goals to achieve; I am more convinced than ever though, that it's the proper path to take.

European tourism has been long leading the way. Today we need to step up again and claim our share, attempting a swift recovery and paving the way for an even greater future for European tourism. Investment in market intelligence systems, data management, human capital, diversification of markets, products and services; these are our tools that we need to use in a swift and fruitful way, through coordination at all governance levels and extensive synergies with the private sector and the civil society.

I welcome the initiative of the European Commission to launch a dialogue among all interested parties on sustainable tourism recovery and the strategic orientations for the tourism of tomorrow. I am very much positive that the work of the European Tourism Convention will help extend the fabric of our common efforts, so that we shield European tourism and provide it with all necessary resources and support to further flourish and develop, breaking through these difficult times.

**Harry Theoharis**