

**Agenda**  
**Worshop on Digitalisation - the driver of growth for tourism businesses**  
 How to access finance and enhance your skills for digital tourism  
 Friday 15 February 2019  
 Sofia, Bulgaria



11:00 - 11:30	<b>Welcome coffee / registration of participants</b>
11:30 - 11:45	<b>Welcome speech</b> Marina Kirova, European Semester Officer, Directorate-General for Communication European Commission Representation in Bulgaria
11:45 - 12:45	<b>Session 1: Going digital with EU funds supporting tourism</b>  This panel will show SME representatives how they can access EU funds for improving the digitalisation of their business in tourism.  Leading experts from relevant bodies will be on-hand to offer guidance on the various funding sources available and, provide information on the available funding opportunities. Business examples will offer practical tips for applying. For SMEs, this will be an opportunity to discover how digitalisation can help to further boost tourism business, and how and where to access EU funds to put their ideas into practice.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p>• <b>Natanail Stefanov</b>, Chairman, Bulgarian Startup Association            Chief Enthusiast at BESCO – the Bulgarian Startup Association and Executive Board Member of Sofia Tech Park. He loves Bulgaria and is devoted to working for the economic and social development of the country. He has got diverse professional background having worked on various projects for different organisations, including startups, government institutions, NGOs, international corporations, and local businesses.            His personal mission with BESCO is to establish better communication between the startup community and institutions, so that an even friendlier business and investment environment is created, through legislation improvements, more effective policies, and specific actionable initiatives. Another priority is to promote Bulgaria as “The European Startup Incubator”. Due to its partnership network, BESCO supports companies based in Bulgaria to internationalize and innovate more effectively, sharing the experience, know-how, and contacts of its partners.            As a personality Natanail is keenly interested in entrepreneurship, formal and informal education, business, arts, culture, and social activities. He also teaches at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Sofia University.</p> </li> <li> <p>• <b>Veselin Iliev</b>, Director General of Enterprise Europe Network Office in Sofia            Veselin is Director General International Economic Relations in Bulgarian Industrial Association, manager of Enterprise Europe Network, National contact point “Access to Risk Finance” under Horizon 2020, licensed guide of IMP<sup>3</sup>rove Innovation Management Academy, and licensed mentor in Innovation Health Check of Enterprise Ireland.            He is engaged in Working groups Internationalisation and Access to Finance, contact point Scale up companies for Enterprise Europe Network, investment consulting.            Veselin is engineer Hydraulic and pneumatic automation, master of International economic relations, post graduate for Finance with The Chartered Institute of Bankers, London. He specialized in China, Belgium, Austria, Spain and Germany. He speaks English, working knowledge in Slovene, Russian, and Serbian languages.</p> </li> <li> <p>• <b>Savina Nedyalkova</b>, State Expert in Strategic Planning and Product Development Unit at the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria.            State Expert in Strategic Planning and Product Development Unit at the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria. Currently she is a Member of the European Commission's Tourism Advisory Committee.</p> </li> </ul>

	<p>Before joining the Ministry in 2012 she worked as a Marketing coordinator at an international hotel chain, and as an External projects coordinator at a European non-governmental organization for creative industries. She holds Master's degrees in EU Law and in Marketing, and a Bachelor's degree in Tourism.</p> <p>Her professional experience and prime interests lie in public policy design and implementation, tourism sustainable development, digital transformation, creative industries, and international relations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Angelina Todorova</b>, Head of unit coordination, Fund of funds</li> </ul> <p>Angelina Todorova joined the Fund of Fund's team as Head of Unit Coordination in June 2018. She is a leading specialist in the sphere of strategic planning, European Funds and Programmes. In her previous work for the Ministry of Finance, she participated in the elaboration and negotiation of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007-2013, the foundation of the first Structural and Cohesion Funding in Bulgaria as an EU Member-State. Ms Todorova later supported the process of approval of the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 and represented Bulgaria in the peer review of the Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization (RIS3) 2014-2020. After 2014 she has been working on innovation issues for the Joint Research Center in Brussels and for the Cluster for Aero-Space Technologies, Research and Applications (CASTRA).</p> <p>After Angelina Todorova graduated from Oxford, she continued her studies with a joint Master's Degree in European Studies from University of Graz, Eurac Academy and EIPA, and traineeship programmes in the Council of the EU and ENA, Paris.</p>
12:45 - 14:00	<p><b>Lunch break</b></p>
14:00 - 15:00	<p><b>Session 2: Digitalisation: benefits for SMEs in the tourism sector</b></p> <p>The tourism sector is a significant contributor to the Bulgarian economy with nearly 9 million foreign tourists in 2017. This number is likely to rise as Plovdiv is one of the two European Capitals of Culture in 2019.</p> <p>This panel would show how Bulgarian SMEs in the tourism sector can further benefit from digitalisation to attract new clients and, find new business opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peter Ruskov, PHD</b>, The Edge, Innovation and digital transformation of the tourism</li> </ul> <p>Professor Dr. Eng. Petko Ruskov is a computer engineer and has a long and extensive practice and experience as an entrepreneur, facilitator, trainer and mentor in the field of computer engineering. His experience in the technological entrepreneurship field consists in teaching subjects such as "Technology Entrepreneurship", "Technology Commercialization" and other innovative courses as "Blockchain – architecture and application" at universities in Bulgaria. He works on issues and projects for research, development and commercialization of technology and supervisors successfully numerous PhD students and he is co-founder and CTCO of the spin-off The Edge: Research and Business Development. Dr. Ruskov is a founder of MSc "e-Business" and MSc "Technology Entrepreneurship" at the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics, Sofia University and local coordinator of the EU project Coneect. He consultants and mentors student teams to participate in national, European and world competitions for business plans and innovative companies, including Intel Challenge, BizBarcelona, JA-YE, NASA International Space Apps Challenge and etc. Dr. Ruskov is a member of BizBarcelona Global Nominating Committee, JA Bulgaria, SAI and other institutions. He participates in editorial boards and program committees of several national and international journals and conferences. Hi has also worked for many international project with the University of Arizona, the UC Berkeley, many EU Universities, the Innopolis foundation, Korea, GCC KAIST Korea and etc. He has published three books and over 120 publications in journals and conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dimitur Ignatov</b>, CEO Iwalk.bg</li> </ul> <p>Creator of THE FIRST NATIONAL, DIGITAL PLATFORM in BULGARIA, the only one of its kind and the world for now. Turns the map of BULGARIA into "living" - via 3D and VR "live" cities, museums, churches, fortresses, all cultural and historical museums and monuments of culture, values and natural phenomenon. IWALK.BG virtually and digitally brings you to the treasure of rich Bulgarian history and culture, makes you engaged with the most precious - recreation in the present of the past through the modern future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hristo Hristozov</b>, HVH consulting and Smarttourism</li> </ul> <p>Managing owner HVH consulting ltd - offering specialized consulting in the field of management</p>

and information technologies in tourism; Manager of ProActivePersonnel - offering specialized consulting in the field of human resources development in the field of tourism; Member of the Board of Directors of Lighthouse Golf & Spa Hotel AD since 2011; Teaching Corporate Governance at the Faculty of Economics at Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski", financial management and management of programs and portfolios at the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Public Private Partnerships, Electronic Justice and Electronic Public Procurement at the Faculty of Law of the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"; he is a consultant of the EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF OUTDOOR EMPLOYERS for developing a competence model and professional standards for work since 2015.

Professional interests in the field of tourism: knowledge management; intelligent management of human resources in tourism; innovative and creative models and information technologies in the good management of tourism.

- **Stefan Karapanchev**, TravellLine Bulgaria

Managing Partner, creates TravellLine Bulgaria (legal name Anstea TL Synergy Ltd.) after more than 15 years of successful professional experience in the tourist industry at all levels in the hotel industry to the General Manager of the 5 star Complex with 778 premises, Operations Manager of Chain Hotels. Experienced in: management of sea, mountain, city, spa 4 and 5 star complexes, chains Hotels (hotel and apartment complexes, holiday villages, spa hotels, gated complexes); professional management of tourist sites with innovative ideas and development of Sales Target & Management Strategy; development and successful implementation of Operational Standards for service and quality control of the offered services and tourist product; Human resources management and team and manager training for efficient process management in a complex with an individual approach to quality service and satisfaction of guests, in achieving the results and goals of management and Cloud-Based Management Solutions for Hoteliers.

15:00 - 16:00

**Session 3: Digital skills SMEs need to keep up with consumer demand**

With Bulgaria being one of the fastest- rising tourist destinations in Europe, how can SMEs working in tourism find new and innovative ways to capitalise on this?

Learn what skills and tools SMEs would need to keep up with consumer demand thanks to digitalisation. Going digital and using digital solutions such as internet payment would open up new business opportunities.

- **Lybomir Botev**, Virtual eyes, travel platform

Lyubomir Botev obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in Tourism at the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski. His master's thesis, supervised by assistant professor Emil Petrov, was dedicated to the creation of a platform for virtual tourism in real time.

After successfully defending his thesis, Lyubomir continued developing the project for live stream sightseeing tours of Sofia. Thus far, virtual tourists from Belgium, The Netherlands, Russia, The USA, Great Britain, The Czech Republic and Bosnia and Herzegovina have participated in the virtual tours offered by the program.

The target market comprises school and university students, who study tourism and tourist guiding, people with reduced mobility, prisoners, professional tour guides, etc.

- **Peter Lozanov**, 15TOGO, Managing Partner & Founder

Peter has been working in the field of marketing and advertising for more than 10 years and he is the founder of Symbol Media Group and FlyEvents. Four years ago he founded Tripsy.club - one of the leading Group Travel companies in Bulgaria.

He is currently Co-Founder and CEO of 15toGO ([www.15toGO.com](http://www.15toGO.com)) – a social travel app and a marketplace for group tours uniting travelers with different interests and giving the opportunity for direct bookings from the local tour operators listed on the platform.

- **Viktor Todorov**, Chief Operations Officer, Tourism Innovations Academy

Over the last 14 years, Viktor has been advising companies in Bulgaria, England and Denmark in sales and business development. He graduated from the MBA at UEL, UK and has specialized in Hospitality Management at Higher Hotel Institute Cyprus.

Since December 2016 he has been working as a business development manager at Clientric - an innovative company that helps HoReCa sites to increase their revenue with a full cycle of Marketing & Sales solutions through selected hardware, software tools and services. In the same year an Academy of Innovation in Tourism was set up, focusing on acquainting the industry with modern tools and techniques to increase sales. Through this activity, the team strives to prove

	<p>that tourism can be a modern, modern and sustainable business and at the same time to support and develop Bulgaria and its economy".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Nikolina Ilieva</b>, Green Mark Media  Nikolina Ivanova is the founder of the digital marketing agency - Green Mark Media and she has fifteen years' experience in communications and online business development. She is a member of The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and graduate "Digital Marketing in Mobile" expert at the Oxford College of Marketing. Her job as a consultant involves helping businesses achieve their goals by harvesting the benefits of digital marketing. Nikolina shares know-how, working solutions and digital skills with companies in construction &amp; real estate, travel &amp; tourism, health, education, wholesale &amp; retail, and more business sectors. </li> <li> <b>Kaloyan Spasov</b>, Manager of hotel Yastrebets  General Manager Hotel Yastrebets Wellness and Spa; Master Degree in Finance – UNWE – 2006; Two years Internship work and study program in Massachusetts State University – 2002-2004. Relationship manager at Sofia Corporate Center, DSK Bank part of OTP Group 2005-2007; Projects Financial Manager at See Capital Management – 2007-2011; GM at Hotel Yastrebets Wellness and Spa – 2011 – present; CEO at Hastings EOOD. Management of Hotel Yastrebets, Restaurant La Casa, Restaurant Corso, Restaurant La Terrazza – Sofia 2012- April 2018CEO at Hastings EOOD. Management of Hotel Yastrebets, Restaurant La Terrazza – Sofia 2012- present. </li> </ul>
16:00 - 16:30	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Andreas BEIKOS</b>, Head of European Investment Bank Office in Bulgaria </li> </ul>