



PRESS RELEASE
ON THE WEBINAR ON CULTURE AND HEALTH:
“THE ROLE OF CREATIVE ARTS IN PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS”

In cooperation with the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS) organized an online webinar on Culture and Health entitled “*The Role of Creative Arts in Promoting Mental Wellness*” on 13 May 2026.

The webinar was structured in two thematic sessions: “*Understanding Mental Health: Common Challenges and Misconceptions*” and “*Experiencing Art for Wellbeing*.” It brought together health professionals, artists, academics, policymakers, and civil society representatives, providing a platform for the exchange of views on the role of creative arts in fostering mental wellbeing, reducing stigma, and promoting inclusivity.

In his opening remarks, the BSEC PERMIS Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Dimitrios Rallis, highlighted the importance of addressing mental health through open and inclusive dialogue as a fundamental component of overall wellbeing that concerns all segments of society. He drew attention to increasing incidences of depression, particularly among younger generations facing the pressures and uncertainties of contemporary life, and emphasized the need to enhance awareness, education, and public engagement on mental health-related issues. He further noted the intention of BSEC PERMIS to strengthen its engagement in this field, including through the integration of relevant topics into the work and agendas of the respective BSEC Working Groups.

Through interactive dialogue and exchange with participants, the webinar contributed to raising awareness, disseminating evidence-based practices, and highlighting the transformative role of the arts in supporting mental health, social inclusion, and the reduction of stigma and discrimination.