



ICBSS Report for the 2nd 'BSEC Month of Culture'



November 2018

1. Concept

The **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** launched the **BSEC Month of Culture (MoC)**, in 2017, with the aim to promote the cultural identity of the Black Sea region and enhance its visibility to the wider public.

The **1st edition of the BSEC Month of Culture** was held successfully on 1-30 June 2017, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the BSEC Organisation.

The MoC is a month long programme of diverse cultural activities related to the rich cultural heritage of the 12 BSEC Member States. Our aspiration is to establish the '**BSEC Month of Culture**' as an annual event that will include more cultural activities each year.

The **2nd edition of the BSEC Month of Culture** was launched **from 1 to 30 November 2018**, on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of ICBSS.

2. Implementation of the BSEC Month of Culture 2018

a) **Methodology**

All information material used during the event was gathered through research, as well as it was provided by the BSEC Member States.

More specifically, prior to the event, the ICBSS did an extensive research on the 12 unique BSEC cultures; research focused on literature, music, theatre & performance art, painting & sculpting, monuments, natural sights, and gastronomy. It has been a challenge to limit the vast amount of information of each country down to a manageable amount to be used during the event.

Additionally, the ICBSS contacted, through BSEC PERMIS and the BSEC Member States' Embassies in Athens, the respective cultural institutions of the BSEC Member States, kindly requesting for their contribution to the event.

In this regard, the ICBSS would like to extend its appreciation to **Azerbaijan, Georgia, Greece and Turkey** for their valuable contribution to the 2nd BSEC Month of Culture, with electronic material about their cultural history.

b) **Activities**

The **2nd 'BSEC Month of Culture'** was successfully launched on November 1, and ran until November 30, 2018.

Throughout the whole month, the ICBSS posted on its **website** (www.icbss.org), **Facebook** (@icbss.org) and **Twitter** (@icbss_dikemep), trivia about literature, music, theatre, performance art, painting, sculpting, monuments, natural sights and gastronomy of the 12 BSEC Member States.

Posts were uploaded on a daily basis, in various forms, i.e. short texts, online quizzes, short video stories and clips. In addition, in order to disseminate information as widely as possible, the ICBSS included three dedicated hashtags **#MoC2018**, **#ICBSS20**, and **#CultureBSEC** alongside the hashtag of each country and thematic of the post.

For example, below is a post about Albanian natural monuments in Theth and Valbona area:

- Have you ever been to the picturesque **Albanian Alps**?

‘I think no place where human beings live has given me such an impression of majestic isolation from the entire world’, said Edith Durham, a famous English traveler and writer on the Balkans, who visited the area of Theth and Valbona as early as in 1908.

Many years have passed since then, but the trip to the wild mountains in the north of Albania still remains one of a kind experience.

[#MoC2018 #ICBSS20 #CultureBSEC #blacksea #monuments #Albania](#)

[Available on <https://bit.ly/2KTHmqy>]

In total, **63 posts** were uploaded being allocated to each category in the following way:

- Monuments and natural sights: **12 posts**, gastronomy: **10 posts**, literature, theatre & performance art, painting & sculpting: **9 posts per each of the three categories**, and, finally, music: **7 posts**.
- **5 posts** per country, plus **3 dedicated posts** to Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey with the promo videos kindly presented by the three countries’ cultural institutions.
- **3 online quizzes** created by the ICBSS, through the platform of PlayBuzz on i) BSEC cultural heritage, ii) unusual gastronomic traditions and, iii) UNESCO monuments across the wider Black Sea region.

An analytical programme with all uploaded posts, by date, is provided in the following table:

	Date	Post
1	11/01/2018	Azerbaijan, promo video
2	11/01/2018	Gastronomy (Albania), Tave Kosi
3	11/01/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Greece), Thessaloniki International Film Festival
4	11/02/2018	Monuments (Georgia), Svaneti
5	11/02/2018	Music (Ukraine), Dakhabrakha
6	11/02/2018	Literature (Armenia), Hovhannes Thumanian
7	11/05/2018	Turkey, promo video
8	11/05/2018	Gastronomy (Greece), Dakos
9	11/06/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Serbia), Marina Abramovic
10	11/06/2018	Gastronomy (Moldova), Zeama
11	11/06/2018	Monuments (Bulgaria), Madara Rider
12	11/07/2018	Music (Russia), Rachmaninov
13	11/07/2018	Literature (Georgia), Ilia Chavchavadze
14	11/07/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Romania), Constantin Brâncuși
15	11/08/2018	Monuments (Armenia), Monastery of Geghard and the Upper Azat Valley
16	11/08/2018	Gastronomy (Azerbaijan), Qutab
17	11/08/2018	Music (Albania), Cifteli

18	11/09/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Ukraine), Maria Priymachenko
19	11/09/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Turkey), Mevlemi Sema
20	11/09/2018	Monuments (Serbia), Derdap National Park
21	11/12/2018	Georgia, promo video
22	11/12/2018	Music (Romania), Maria Tanase
23	11/13/2018	Monuments (Russia), Ensemble of the Novodevichy Convent
24	11/13/2018	Gastronomy (Serbia), Vasina Torta
25	11/13/2018	Literature (Bulgaria), Georgi Gospodinov
26	11/14/2018	ICBSS Quiz, BSEC Cultural Heritage
27	11/14/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Moldova), Gregoire Michonze
28	11/15/2018	Monuments (Ukraine), Residence of Bukovian and Dalmatian Metropolitans
29	11/15/2018	Music (Greece), Rebetiko
30	11/15/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Azerbaijan), Ashiqs
31	11/16/2018	Monuments (Albania), Theth and Valbona
32	11/16/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Turkey), Iznik Pottery
33	11/16/2018	Gastronomy (Romania), Papanasi
34	11/19/2018	Monuments (Georgia), Vardzia
35	11/19/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Greece), Tinian Marble Craftsmanship
36	11/19/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Armenia), European Film Festival
37	11/20/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Russia), Ballet, Maya Plisetskaya
38	11/20/2018	Literature (Azerbaijan), Sakina Akhundzadeh
39	11/21/2018	Gastronomy (Albania), Ballokume
40	11/21/2018	Monuments (Romania), Peles Castle
41	11/21/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Bulgaria), Vladimir Dimitrov
42	11/22/2018	Music (Moldova), Maria Biesu
43	11/22/2018	Gastronomy (Ukraine), Poltava Galushki
44	11/22/2018	Literature (Turkey), Latife Tekin
45	11/23/2018	ICBSS Quiz, BSEC gastronomy
46	11/26/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Serbia), Milena Pavlovic-Barili
47	11/26/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Armenia), Siranush
48	11/26/2018	Literature (Russia), Ivan Bunin
49	11/26/2018	Monuments (Moldova), Old Orhei
50	11/27/2018	Monuments (Greece), Delos
51	11/27/2018	Gastronomy (Armenia), Gata
52	11/27/2018	Literature (Ukraine), Serhiy Zhadan
53	11/28/2018	Theatre & Performance Art (Bulgaria), Gergana Dimitrova
54	11/28/2018	Music (Turkey), Kudum
55	11/28/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Russia), Ivan Aivazovskiy
56	11/28/2018	Literature (Romania), Mircea Cartarescu
57	11/29/2018	Painting & Sculpting (Albania), Vangjush Mio
58	11/29/2018	Gastronomy (Georgia), Pkhali
59	11/29/2018	Literature (Serbia), Milos Crnjanski
60	11/29/2018	Theatre (Moldova), Teatrul Național Eugene Ionesco

61	11/30/2018	Monuments (Azerbaijan), Natural poppy fields
62	11/30/2018	Bulgaria, promo video
63	11/30/2018	ICBSS Quiz, UNESCO monuments across the BSEC region

3. Dissemination and Impact

The 'BSEC Month of Culture' had a great impact; evidently more through social media than the website.

In total, **posts in Facebook reached a total of 29.000 users** while reactions to posts (namely likes, comments, shares) were **1443**. In particular, the ICBSS would like to extend its appreciation to the **Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)** for sharing most of the posts dedicated to the 2nd 'BSEC Month of Culture' on its Facebook page, thus increasing dissemination.

In addition, **posts in Twitter reached 46.200 users in total** with **101** retweets and **183** likes.

Moreover, statistics show that several posts had bigger impact than others.

More specifically, the **TOP-3 Facebook posts with the greatest impact** were the post about Theth and Valbona area of Albania posted on Nov. 16, that reached **1518** users; followed by the promo video about Azerbaijan posted on Nov. 1 (**1460** users), and the post on Romanian gastronomic speciality called 'papanasi', posted on Nov. 16 and reached **1303** users.

Additionally, the **TOP-3 Twitter posts with the greatest impact** was the post about Armenian poet, Hovhannes Thumanian, which was published on Nov. 2 and reached **2161** users; followed by the post on traditional Albanian recipe, Tave Kosi, which was published on Nov. 1 and reached **1796** users, and the post about the Serbian Djerdap National Park, published on Nov. 9 and reached **1050** users.

In particular, uploaded **Quizzes of MoC2018** had the following impact:

- 'How well do you know the unique cultures of the BSEC countries?' reached **265** Facebook users and **237** users on Twitter;
- 'Enjoy your Friday with the most delicious quiz!' posted on Nov. 23 reached **639** Facebook users and **100** users on Twitter;
- 'UNESCO monuments in the Black Sea region' posted on Nov. 30, the last day of MoC2018, reached **513** Facebook users.

With regards to the **dedicated posts**, courtesy of Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Georgia:

- 'Light Your Fire!', a promo video about Azerbaijan posted on Nov. 1, highlighted the start of the MoC2018 and reached **1460** users on Facebook and **734** on Twitter;
- 'Black Sea Time-lapse', a promo video about Turkey posted on Nov 5, reached **934** users on Facebook and **726** on Twitter;
- 'This is Life', a promo video about Georgia posted on Nov 12, reached **806** users on Facebook and **875** on Twitter.

4. Preparations for the 'BSEC Month of Culture 2019'

Following on the successful impact of the previous two editions of the 'BSEC Month of Culture', the ICBSS will launch the **third edition of the BSEC Month of Culture, in 2019!**

Taking into consideration the plethora of information on the cultural heritage of the BSEC countries, the ICBSS aims to include **more information and additional activities** in the 3rd edition, alongside the electronic posts.

The exact dates of the event are to be announced in due course.

Within this framework, in view of the preparations of the BSEC Month of Culture 2019, the ICBSS would like **to invite the BSEC Member States to get actively involved in the preparation process**, by suggesting activities, sending information material and/or offering any other suggestion for the third edition of the Cultural Month.

For more information, please contact Ms. Georgia Chantzi at gchantzi@icbss.org or at +30 210 32 42 321.

5. Conclusion

All posts uploaded during the BSEC Month of Culture 2018 are accessible through ICBSS website and social media accounts:

- ✓ Website: www.icbss.org
- ✓ Facebook: [@icbss.org](https://www.facebook.com/icbss.org)
- ✓ Twitter: [@icbss_dikemep](https://twitter.com/icbss_dikemep)

Join this remarkable cultural journey, today!