



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**CONCLUSIONS
OF THE INFORMAL MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON EDUCATION**

BSEC Headquarters, 1-2 November 2016

1. The Informal Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 1-2 November 2016.
2. The Informal Meeting was chaired by Mr. Vladan LAZOVIC, Minister Counsellor, Special Representative of the Serbian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC.
3. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Informal Meeting:

Republic of Armenia
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
4. The representative of the PABSEC International Secretariat attended as BSEC Related Body.
5. The representative of the BSUN attended as BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
6. The List of Participants of the Informal Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Draft Agenda of the Informal Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BSEC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF EDUCATION

8. The participants took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the ways and dynamics of the implementation of the Resolution of the 15th BSEC Council (Moscow, 1 November 2006), since the last Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education (Rostov-on-Don, 18-19 May 2016).

AGENDA ITEM 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA 2012”: FIRST YEAR OF THE SECOND MEDIUM-TERM (2016-2018)

9. The participants took note of information on the developments with regard to the implementation of the “BSEC Economic Agenda 2012” and the priorities for the second medium-term (2016-2018), provided by the BSEC PERMIS.

a) Discussion of concrete proposals on the implementation of the Joint Programmes

(i) Questionnaire on the Academic and Student Mobility among the BSEC Member States

10. The representative of the Hellenic Republic recalled that the final report on the Questionnaire on the Academic and Student Mobility among the BSEC Member States was submitted, and suggested that the conclusions of the report might be used for future discussions on the issue. The final report is attached as **Annex III**.

(ii) Questionnaire on Cooperation in Education amongst the BSEC Member States

11. The participants took note of the draft Questionnaire on Cooperation in Education amongst the BSEC Member States (**Annex IV**), presented by the delegation of the Russian Federation.

12. Interested BSEC Member States are invited to send their comments/amendments on the proposed draft to the BSEC PERMIS **by 25 January 2017**.

(iii) Optimization of the Existing Data-Collection Procedures in the field of Education

13. The delegation of the Russian Federation requested to extend date for delivery to the BSEC PERMIS of the Proposals on optimization of the existing BSEC data-collection procedures in the field of Education **by 1 December 2016**.

(iv) Integrated Virtual Environment for Higher Education in BSEC Countries

14. The representative of the Hellenic Republic recalled that the project proposal on the Integrated Virtual Environment for Higher Education in BSEC Countries was presented to the Working Group in 2015 (attached as **Annex V**) and reiterated the call to other Member States to join the Project in order to submit it for funding.

15. The representatives of Romania and the Russian Federation expressed interest of their respective countries to join the Project.

16. The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed willingness to consult with the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education with a view to possibly contributing to the development of Integrated Virtual Environment for Higher Education in BSEC Countries.

(v) Creation of a Leaflet/Brochure for Higher Education in Black Sea Region

17. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed that the preparation of the leaflet/brochure, in consultation with Romania and the Russian Federation, is under way and that the first draft should be circulated to the Member States well before the next meeting of the Working Group.

(vi) Quality Assurance in Higher Education

18. The participants took note of the joint report presented by the Hellenic Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey on recent developments in the area of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the BSEC Member States, and coordinated by the Russian Federation (attached as **Annex VI**).

19. Interested Member States were invited to prepare similar reports on the issue in advance of the next meeting of the Working Group.

20. It was proposed to support activities of the BSUN and use its network for collaboration in the field of Quality Assurance.

(vii) National Key Universities of the BSEC Member States

21. The delegation of the Russian Federation presented proposals on national key Universities of the BSEC Member States (attached as **Annex VII**).

22. The BSEC Member States and the BSUN were invited to send their comments/recommendations **by 15 April 2017** to be integrated into the relevant Draft Concept Note, in order to present it at the next meeting of the Working Group.

23. The delegation of Romania announced that the country would submit its comments and recommendations on the above mentioned proposal.

(viii) Proposals on the Cooperation in the Field of Education

24. The representative of the Republic of Armenia informed that due to the structural changes in the Ministry of Education and Science the proposals will be submitted at a later stage.

(ix) Presentations on Other Issues of Education

25. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey informed on the readiness to deliver at the next meeting of the Working Group a presentation on the activities undertaken by the Ministry of National Education for the Education of the Syrian Citizens under Temporary Protection of Turkey, and Foreign Students' Information System.
26. The representative of the Hellenic Republic presented information on Summer School for Refugees "Beyond the Refugee Crisis – Studying in Europe" (attached as **Annex VIII**).
27. The representative of Romania invited the Member States to consider sharing best practices in the field of Education in bilateral relations, for possible use in multilateral cooperation.
28. The representative of Romania also expressed readiness to prepare a report on recent developments in Vocational Education in Romania, to be presented at the next meeting of the Working Group.

b) Achievements Report for 2016

29. The participants considered, amended and agreed on the Achievements Report of the Working Group on the implementation of the "BSEC Economic Agenda 2012" for 2016, prepared by the BSEC PERMIS. The Achievements Report is attached as **Annex IX**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: YOUTH AND SPORTS ISSUES AND EDUCATION

30. The participants took note of the information presented by the BSEC PERMIS on the consideration of Youth and Sports issues within the BSEC.
31. The delegation of the Russian Federation proposed to prepare information on recent developments and prospective trends, as well as a list of international youth and sports events related to education in the BSEC Countries, to be presented at the next meeting of the Working Group.
32. The representative of the Hellenic Republic expressed interest of the country to join the project.

AGENDA ITEM 5: COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

33. The participants took note of the information presented by the BSEC PERMIS on the collaboration with other international and regional organizations.
34. The participants took note of the proposals of the Russian Federation on enhancing cooperation of BSEC with the following international organizations and associations in the field of Education: *UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP)*; *UNESCO Institute of Information Technology in Education (UNESCO IITE)*; *Academic Cooperation Association (ACA)*; *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)*; *European Association of International Education (EAIE)*; *Magna Charta Observatory*. The presented information is attached as **Annex X**.

AGENDA ITEM 6: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF) AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU) PROJECTS

35. The participants took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the state of affairs with regard to the replenishment of the Project Development Fund (PDF) and on the Guidelines for the BSEC Project Management Unit (PMU), as well as the creation of the Black Sea Project Promotion Facility.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

36. The representative of the PABSEC International Secretariat informed on the current activities of the PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee and on the consideration of the topic “Education and Science for Sustainable Development in the BSEC Member States”.

37. As the last Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Education was held back in 2005, the incoming Chairmanships of BSEC were invited to consider the possibility of organizing a Ministerial Meeting in 2017.

38. The participants took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the plans to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the BSEC in 2017.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE INFORMAL MEETING

39. The participants adopted the present Conclusions for submission to the next meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.