



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT
OF THE MEETING OF
THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON EDUCATION**

BSEC Headquarters, 13 November 2015

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 13 November 2015.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mrs. Brândușa PREDESCU, Special Representative of the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office to BSEC, Minister Plenipotentiary, Consulate General of Romania in Istanbul.
3. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of the PABSEC International Secretariat attended as BSEC Related Body.
5. Prof. Dimitrios TRIANTAPHYLLOU, Head of Department of International Relations Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences of Kadir Has University in Istanbul, attended as guest.
6. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed 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 Working Group took note of the information by 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 (BSEC Headquarters, 9-10 March 2015).

9. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed that the evaluation report of the Country-Coordinator on the activities of the Working Group during the period 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2015, will be submitted before the next meeting of the Working Group.

10. The Working Group welcomed the official application of the Hellenic Republic to continue as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group for another period of two years, starting from 1 January 2016.

AGENDA ITEM 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “ECONOMIC AGENDA: TOWARDS AN ENHANCED BSEC PARTNERSHIP”:

a. Discussion of the existing proposals on the implementation of the Joint Programmes

b. Future developments:

- **Priorities for the second medium-term (2016-2018)**
- **Envisaged deliverables/projects**
- **First medium-term (2013-2015) achievements report**

11. The representative of the Hellenic Republic introduced the conclusions of the *Questionnaire on the academic and student mobility among the BSEC Member States* (attached as **Annex III**) and invited the relevant Member States to communicate the clarifications referred to in the Questionnaire.

12. The representatives of Romania and the Republic of Turkey informed that they have already communicated requested clarifications regarding the Questionnaire.

13. The Working Group reiterated its call on the relevant authorities of the Member States that have not yet done so, to respond to the Questionnaire as soon as possible.

14. The delegation of the Republic of Armenia informed that a number of leading universities of Armenia have elaborated on concrete proposals for strengthening cooperation in the field of education among the BSEC Member States, aimed at implementation of the goals defined in the BSEC “Economic Agenda 2012”. The proposals will be presented officially to the Member States for discussion at the next meeting of the Working Group.

15. The representative of the Hellenic Republic recalled that a project proposal on “*Integrated Virtual Environment for Higher Education in BSEC Countries*”, on the basis of the Portal of Education, was presented at the last meeting of the Working Group (attached as **Annex IV**) with a view to be elaborated and implemented within the framework of the BSEC Project Management Unit, and reiterated the invitation to Member States to join the Project as partners.

16. The representative of Romania delivered a presentation on “*The Quality Assurance of the Romanian Higher Education System*”, attached as **Annex V**.

17. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey delivered a presentation on “*The Role of ICT in Turkish Education System*”, attached as **Annex VI**.

18. The delegation of the Russian Federation delivered a presentation on “*Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Education Prospective*”, attached as **Annex VII**. The same delegation also provided information on a new portal on Russian language learning (www.Pushkininstitute.ru).

19. The Working Group took note of the information provided by BSEC PERMIS on the outcome of the International Conference on “*Professional Education and Economic Needs of the Black Sea Region*”, held in Chişinău, on 24 April 2015.

20. The Working Group considered and agreed on the Medium-Term Achievements Report (2013-2015) on the implementation of the “BSEC Economic Agenda 2012”, prepared by BSEC PERMIS, and decided to submit it to the next meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials. The Achievements Report is attached as **Annex VIII**.

21. The Working Group also considered and confirmed for the next medium-term (2016-2018) the following priorities of the “BSEC Economic Agenda 2012” on Education:

- Supporting the exchange of information and experiences with regard to the modernization of the educational systems in the BSEC Member States aimed at increasing sustainable growth and the establishment of knowledge based societies;
- Encouraging the mobility of academic staff and students among the BSEC Member States, including through bilateral and multilateral agreements and scholarships among higher education institutions.
- Developing the partnership with initiatives by the United Nations and other international organizations devoted to university cooperation on sustainability.

AGENDA ITEM 4: YOUTH AND SPORTS ISSUES AND EDUCATION

22. The Working Group took note of the information presented by the BSEC PERMIS on the consideration of Youth and Sports issues within BSEC and encouraged the Member States to propose projects reflecting the interconnection between Education and Youth and Sports.

23. The delegation of the Russian Federation proposed to use the system of international youth camps in order to increase cooperation by youth exchanges among the BSEC Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 5: COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

24. The Working Group took note of the information presented by BSEC PERMIS on the collaboration with other international and regional organizations, and requested BSEC PERMIS to continue consultations with the UNESCO with a view to strengthening the cooperation between the two organizations.

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

25. The Working Group 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).

26. The Working Group invited the Member States to submit project proposals within PDF and in compliance with the Guidelines for the PMU.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27. The Working Group took note of the information on the EU initiative to establish a “*Black Sea Studies Curriculum*”, provided by Prof. Dimitrios TRIANTAPHYLLOU, member of the EC Committee in charge of the preparation of a feasibility study on the project.

28. The Working Group took note of the information on the activities of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee of PABSEC in 2015, provided by the representative of the PABSEC International Secretariat.

29. The representative of the Russian Federation informed that the Moscow International Educational Fair will be held on 16-17 April 2016, and invited the Member States to attend this event (www.mmco-expo.ru).

30. 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 2016.

31. The representative of Ukraine made a statement. The statement is attached as **Annex IX**.

32. The representative of the Russian Federation made a statement. The statement is attached as **Annex X**.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

33. The Working Group adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.