



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM**

Istanbul, BSEC Headquarters, 8 October 2012

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (WGCT) was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 8 October 2012.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Ambassador Bozkurt ARAN, National Coordinator of the Turkish Chairmanship-in Office; Director of Center for Multilateral Trade Studies, Economic Policy Research Foundation of the Republic of Turkey (TEPAV).
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) and the BSEC Business Council participated in the Meeting as the BSEC Related Bodies.
5. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS, DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TOURISM OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

7. The BSEC PERMIS representative informed on ways and dynamics of the implementation of the Resolution of the 15th BSEC Council (Moscow, 1 November 2006), since the last BSEC Council Meeting (Belgrade, 11 June 2012) with reference to the activities of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism.

8. The participants acknowledged information on the issue provided by the BSEC PERMIS and expressed willingness to proceed actively in securing the necessary dynamics of the implementation of the Council Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations, as well as the Ministerial Declaration.

9. The Working Group took note of the Evaluation Report on the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Working Group for the period of 2011-2012, presented by the Country-Coordinator – the Russian Federation (**Annex III** to this Report). The Evaluation Report will be submitted to the Committee of Senior Officials for consideration.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE “BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA: TOWARDS AN ENHANCED BSEC PARTNERSHIP”.

10. The BSEC PERMIS representative informed on the “BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership” adopted by the BSEC Council in Belgrade, on 11 June 2012, as an important document for guiding the cooperation in the BSEC framework in the years to come. He made particular reference to Goal 8 of the Economic Agenda on Development of Tourism and Protection of Cultural Heritage, the “Working Groups’ Programme Implementation and Impact Survey” and the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey”, communicated to the Member States.

11. In this regard, the Working Group decided on the following:

- to call upon the relevant authorities of the Member States to expedite sending their replies on the Survey by 12 October 2012;
- to consider updating the existing Terms of Reference and to elaborate the new draft Plan of Action (2013-2014) to be discussed at the next Meeting of the Group, on the basis of the outcome of the Survey and the goals of the BSEC Economic Agenda;
- to request the PERMIS to communicate to the Member States the electronic version of models of the Terms of Reference and Action Plan of the Working Groups.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC PUBLIC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

12. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative regarding the newly adopted BSEC Public Communication Strategy.

13. The PERMIS informed the participants that the text of the BSEC Public Communication Strategy has been added to the new Manual prepared by the PERMIS for the Country-Coordinators of the Working Groups in order to ensure that it is taken into consideration in the planning and carrying out of the Working Group activities.

14. The Working Group decided that the process of developing key messages regarding its activities and achievements in accordance with Part VI of the Strategy should be based on the results of the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey”.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FRAMEWORKS OF BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION

15. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative concerning institutional structure frameworks on tourism cooperation which were discussed during the past several years.

16. Upon the request of the representative of the Hellenic Republic, the Working Group decided to remove from the Agenda the following items:

- a) “The International Standing Secretariat on BSEC Cooperation in Tourism”;
- b) “Forum on Cooperation of the Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies of the BSEC Member States”.

17. Upon the proposal of the representative of Georgia, the Working Group decided to retain the item “A Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council”. The Working Group invited Georgia to submit updated paper on the issue which will be circulated to the Member States for their comments and observations.

18. The Working Group decided to defer the issue of “A Branding of the Black Sea Region” to its next Meeting.

TOURISM COOPERATION AREAS:

19. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative on tourism cooperation areas.

a) Maritime and Nautical Tourism Cooperation

20. The Working Group decided to continue discussion on the issue at its next Meeting.

b) Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism

21. The representative of the Russian Federation suggested that the Working Group may wish to pay more attention to medical and clinical aspects of balneology, wellness and spa tourism.

c) Creative Tourism

22. The Working Group decided to defer this issue to its next Meeting.

d) University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region

23. The representative of the Russian Federation informed on the state of affairs with regard to University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of

the Black Sea Region. He has also informed that the meeting of the University representatives from the BSEC Member States was organized in Saint-Petersburg, on 15-16 June 2012.

24. The representative of the Russian Federation informed on the following outcomes of the meeting:

- a draft agreement on the creation of the Consortium was elaborated;
- the Coordination Board to run the project was established;
- a seminar in Crimea is being planned for summer 2013 to which the BSEC Member States are invited.

NATIONAL POLICIES AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

25. The participants reiterated the importance of the issue of sustainable tourism development in the BSEC Member States.

26. The Working Group called upon the Member States to regularly exchange statistical data on tourism through the BSEC PERMIS.

PARTICIPATION IN TOURIST EVENTS AND FAIRS HELD IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

27. The representative of the Republic of Moldova invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the International Travel Fair on “Tourism, Leisure, Hotels”, to be held in Chisinau, on 11-14 April 2013.

28. The representative of Georgia invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the “Caucasus Tourism Fair”, to be held in Tbilisi, in April 2013.

29. The representative of the Republic of Armenia invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the UN World Tourism Organization International Conference on “Universal Values and Cultural Diversity in the XXI century: How can tourism make a difference?”, to be held in Yerevan, on 18-19 October 2012.

30. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan invited the BSEC Member States to participate in Azerbaijan International Travel and Tourism Fair, to be held in Baku, on 4-6 April 2013.

31. The representative of the Hellenic Republic invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the 28th International Tourism Exhibition “Philoxenia”, to be held in Thessaloniki, on 22-25 November 2012, and in the Conference on “Religious and Cultural Tourism in South-Eastern Europe”, to be held in Thessaloniki, on 22 November 2012.

32. The representative of the Republic of Serbia invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the 35th International Tourism Fair, to be held in Belgrade, in February 2013.

33. The representative of the Republic of Turkey invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the International Tourism Fair “Travel Turkey”, to be held in Izmir, on 6-9 December 2012.

34. The representative of the BSEC Business Council invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the BSEC Tourism Summit, to be held in Istanbul, on 14 November 2012.

35. The representative of Ukraine invited the BSEC Member States to communicate to PERMIS relevant information on the events to be organized in the first half of 2013, in order to be included in the calendar of events of incoming BSEC Chairmanship-in-Office (Ukraine).

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF): PROJECT APPLICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

36. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative on the need to define the priority project areas for the PDF funding in the field of tourism and on the replies by the Member States on the issue.

37. The representative of the Republic of Serbia suggested that the issue of cultural routes / cultural tourism should be taken as one of the priority areas for the PDF funding.

38. The Working Group called upon those member States, who have not yet responded, to communicate by 31 December 2012 their proposals on the priority project areas for the PDF funding.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

39. The Working Group expressed its appreciation for the work done by the Russian Federation in its capacity as Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism for the past two years.

40. Since the term-in-office of the Russian Federation as a Country-Coordinator of the Working Group will expire on 31 December 2012, the PERMIS invited the Member States to consider their nominations for this office.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

41. The Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism adopted the present Report and submitted it for consideration to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.