



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**

BSEC Headquarters, 7-8 April 2014

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (WGCT) was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 7-8 April 2015.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Stanislav RUSU, Deputy Director General of the Tourism Agency of the Republic of Moldova.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of PABSEC attended the Meeting as BSEC Related Body.
5. The representative of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) attended the Meeting as Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
6. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended 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

8. The BSEC PERMIS informed 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 Cooperation in Tourism (BSEC Headquarters, 22-23 September 2014).

9. The Working Group took note of the information presented by BSEC PERMIS on the Memorandum BSEC-UNWTO, signed in Athens on 23 October 2014, and decided to consider ways and means of its implementation at its next Meeting.

10. The representative of Ukraine, the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism, presented brief information on its activities noting that the relevant Evaluation Report will be submitted for consideration of the Member States well before the next meeting of the Working Group.

SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM COOPERATION AREAS:

a) Gastronomy and Wine Tourism and b) Film-induced Tourism

11. The BSEC PERMIS presented brief information on the issues.

12. The representative of UNWTO informed on the UNWTO Affiliate Members Programme “*Global Report on Food Tourism*”.

c) Cultural Tourism / Cultural Routes projects

13. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS on the issue and emphasized that combined efforts by the Member States are needed to further promote and implement the joint projects.

14. The representative of the Republic of Serbia informed about the realization of the projects on “*The Route of the Roman Emperors*” and “*Danube Wine Route*”, covering twenty Roman locations and twelve wine regions in Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania and increasing the competitiveness of transnational tourism products in middle and lower Danube.

15. The representative of the Republic of Armenia reiterated the interest of the country to join the MoU on “*The Route of the Roman Emperors*” and kindly requested relevant information of a procedural nature.

16. The representative of the Republic of Moldova informed that the following cultural routes projects will be launched in Moldova in cooperation with Romania: “*Wine routes*”, “*Monasteries routes*” and “*Fortress routes*”.

17. The representative of the Republic of Armenia made a proposal to consider the possibility to elaborate a joint project on “*Wine Routes Cultural Tourism*”, taking into consideration that at least six Member States and an Observer State are engaged in the related

activities and making best of a similar project being implemented by the Council of Europe and of an expertise of UNWTO.

18. The Working Group took note of the information on cultural routes projects within the UNWTO, delivered by the UNWTO representative, and expressed readiness to develop cooperation with the Organization in this area. The information is attached as **Annex III**.

19. The Working Group considered the possibility of holding a joint Meeting with the Working Group on Culture, to be held in autumn 2015, with the aim to further examine the cultural tourism/cultural routes projects.

20. In this regard, the Member States are invited to communicate updated information on their respective projects in advance of the joint Meeting, on the basis of which the BSEC PERMIS will prepare a Progress Report.

d) Maritime and Nautical Tourism. Development of Cruise Tourism

21. The representative of Ukraine kindly proposed to postpone the discussion on the project "*Development of Cruise Tourism in the BSEC Region*" to the next meeting of the Working Group.

e) Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism

22. The representative of the UNWTO informed that a joint Study of the UNWTO and the European Travel Commission (ETC) on Health and Medical Tourism will be finalized in 2015.

23. The Working Group invited interested Member States to communicate to BSEC PERMIS their views/observations on the issue in advance of the next meeting.

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

24. The consideration of this sub-item was deferred to the next Meeting of the Working Group.

g) Youth and Sports issues

25. The Working Group took note of the information presented by BSEC PERMIS on the consideration of Youth and Sports issues within BSEC and the relevant recommendation of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee of PABSEC.

26. The participants exchanged views on possible ways and means (holding seminars, elaborating projects, etc.) to incorporate the Youth and Sports issues in the activities of the Working Group.

27. In this regard, the Member States are invited to present their relevant proposals to be considered at the next meeting of the Working Group.

28. The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed on *the Baku 2015 First European Games*, to be held on 12-28 June 2015.

29. The representative of the UNWTO informed on the Affiliate Members Programme Report on “*The Power of Youth Travel*”.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT DOCUMENTS FOR THE MEETING OF MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF TOURISM OF THE BSEC MEMBER STATES (CHISINAU, 23 APRIL 2015)

30. The representative of the Republic of Moldova introduced the draft documents and informed on the ongoing arrangements for the forthcoming Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the BSEC Member States, to be held in Chisinau, on 23 April 2015.

31. The representative of the Hellenic Republic presented the *rationale* of the elaboration of the draft Action Plan on the implementation of the Athens Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the Member States of the Organizations of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Athens, 23 October 2014).

32. The Working Group considered, amended and finalized the following draft documents, to be adopted at the said Meeting.

- Draft Agenda (attached as **Annex IV**);

- Draft Action Plan on the implementation of the Athens Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the Member States of the Organizations of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Athens, 23 October 2014) (attached as **Annex V**).

33. The Working Group took note of the draft Report of the Meeting, elaborated by BSEC PERMIS (attached as **Annex VI**).

THE “WAY FORWARD FOR AN ACTION PLAN ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “ECONOMIC AGENDA TOWARDS AN ENHANCED BSEC PARTNERSHIP”

34. The BSEC PERMIS informed on the following timeframe of implementation of the “Way Forward for an Action Plan on the implementation of the Economic Agenda 2012” in 2015:

- June 2015: Launching surveys for the next medium-term (2016-2018);

- December 2015: Medium-Term (2013-2015) Achievements Report by WGs and BSEC PERMIS/Related Bodies and approval of the Action Plan for the period 2016-2018.

35. The Working Group took note of the BSEC PERMIS proposal on *Hospitality Traditions in the BSEC Member States* and decided to continue its consideration at its next Meeting.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FRAMEWORKS OF BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION

36. The consideration of the proposals on “*A Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council*” (Georgia) and “*A Branding of the Black Sea Region*” (Republic of Bulgaria) was deferred to the next Meeting of the Working Group.

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

37. The representative of the Hellenic Republic referred to “Alternative Tourism” and “Green Tourism” programmes, which are implemented in order to diversify the Greek tourism product, improve its quality and support sustainable patterns of tourism production and consumption.

38. The representatives of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova presented information on recent developments in the field of sustainable tourism as well as ongoing projects and improvement of legislation in their respective countries.

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

39. The representative of the Republic of Moldova informed that the First International Wine Tourism Forum “*Development of Wine Tourism in the Countries of Southeastern Europe*” will be held back to back with the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Tourism, in Chisinau on 23 April 2015, with the support of the UNWTO, and invited representatives of the Member States to attend the Forum.

40. The representative of the UNWTO kindly encouraged the BSEC Member States to attend the Forum.

41. The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed the participants on the 15th Azerbaijan International Tourism Fair, to be held in Baku on 7-9 April 2016.

42. The representative of the Republic of Moldova informed the participants about the *National Wine Festival*, to be held in Chisinau on the second weekend of October 2015 and kindly invited the BSEC Member States to participate in the event.

43. The representative of the UNWTO informed the participants on the *UNWTO Calendar of International Tourism Events* and invited the BSEC Member States to benefit from it.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF) AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU) PROJECTS

44. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS about the state of affairs with regard to the replenishment of the Project Development Fund (PDF).

45. The Working Group took note of the explanatory remarks by the BSEC PERMIS on the Guidelines for the BSEC Project Management Unit.

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

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

47. The BSEC PERMIS informed the Working Group that the Draft Revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group has been finalized and is being under the consideration by the Committee of Senior Officials.

48. The BSEC PERMIS recalled that the position of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group will be vacant as of 1 July 2015, and invited interested Member States to submit their nominations in accordance with the relevant procedure.

49. The Chairman called upon the BSEC Member States that have not yet done so, to expedite the process of registration for the Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Tourism, to be held in Chisinau on 23 April 2015.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

50. 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.