



Athens, 12 October 2006

BS/EDU/WG/R(2006)1

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

Athens, 11-12 October 2006

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education was held in Athens, on 11-12 October 2006.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Roman ALEXANDROV, Deputy Head of Division of Multilateral Cooperation and International Organizations, Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.
3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
4. The representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC) and the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) also participated in the Meeting.
5. Professor Dimitrios MAVRAKIS, Director, Energy Policy and Development Centre (KEPA), University of Athens, participated in the Meeting as Guest.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

6. The draft agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

ADOPTION OF THE TWO-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION OF BSEC COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

7. The two-year Action Plan, presented by the Country-Coordinator, was discussed and approved with amendments. The Action Plan is attached as Annex III.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT ATHENS DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR EDUCATION (2005):

8. The representatives of the Member States following the recommendations as outlined in the Athens Declaration of the Ministers responsible for Education (Athens, September 2005) expressed their views on the priorities to be taken on.

9. The participants stressed the importance of cooperation in the development of national frameworks of qualification with the aim to have a better compatibility of the educational systems in the BSEC region. The representative of Turkey expressed the interest of Turkey to elaborate on this issue and to convey their proposal to the Member States through PERMIS.

10. The participants exchanged views on the creation of a network and website dedicated to the educational issues of the BSEC Member States, which would be updated systematically by each Member State. They decided to start the implementation of the project and the representative of the Hellenic Republic assumed responsibility to elaborate on it and present the views how to achieve this goal and to inform the Member States through PERMIS in due time.

11. The participants discussed the issue of joint programs between universities and institutions of Higher Education and decided to come up with concrete proposals at the next Meeting of the Working Group.

12. The participants also started to discuss the joint research programs among the Higher Education institutions in BSEC and decided to proceed with exchange of ideas and come up with concrete proposals at the next meeting of the Working Group.

13. The Working Group took note of the project of the Council of Europe considering History teaching and inter-cultural dialogue in the Black Sea region and found it interesting for BSEC. The Working Group requested PERMIS to contact the Council of Europe with the proposal to expand this project for all BSEC Member States and jointly develop it at the level of Higher Education.

14. The Working Group emphasized the importance of providing better understanding and transparency of qualifications received within Vocational and Educational Training (VET) in the BSEC Member States. The Working Group was informed by the representative of the Russian Federation about initiatives proposed by the Russian Federation within the Chairmanship in G-8 Group concerning better understanding of qualifications obtained at national education level. The Working Group requested PERMIS together with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation to study the possibility to involve BSEC Member States in the implementation of the above mentioned initiative.

PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF IDEAS AND PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AMONG BSEC MEMBER STATES (PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND)

15. The participants examined the three projects submitted to BSEC PERMIS in the field of Education.
16. The project entitled “Studies of relationships in 16th century according to the data from Russian, Turkish and Ukrainian archive and historical sources” was submitted by institutions of Ukraine, Turkey and Russia.
17. The Working Group had a negative assessment of the project on the grounds of irrelevance of economic benefit for BSEC cooperation.
18. The project entitled “An Electronic Marketplace to support Pairs of Less Widely Studied European Languages (WISE)” was submitted by institutions of Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia.
19. The Working Group had a positive assessment although there were different views on the essence of the project and decided to forward it to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials.
20. The project entitled Network of Integrated Circuit Design Teaching Centers in Black Sea Region was submitted by institutions of Serbia, Armenia and Bulgaria.
21. The Working Group had a positive assessment of the project and decided to forward it to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22. The representatives of the Member States presented their points of view and elaborated on relevant information on national policies and best practices in the field of education in their countries.
23. Professor D. Mavrakis made a presentation on a project entitled “The EU-BSEC Energy and Climate Policy Networks”. He made an appeal to the participants to encourage their countries to join the activities within the EU funded project with the aim to contribute to the enhancement of the long-distance learning in the EU and BSEC.
24. The Member States welcomed the project, with a view that it may be beneficial for BSEC and requested further information be distributed by PERMIS among the Member States.
25. The delegation of Serbia expressed the interest, as it will assume the role of the Chairman-in-Office of BSEC during the period November 2006 – April 2007, to host the next Meeting of the Working Group on Education in Belgrade, in April 2007.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

26. The Participants expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs of the Hellenic Republic for the hospitality extended to them during the Meeting.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

27. The date of the next Meeting will be communicated in due time through BSEC PERMIS.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

28. The present Report was adopted for submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials.
