



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, 20 October 2015

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism (WGCT) was held at the BSEC Headquarters, on 20 October 2015.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mrs. Brandușa PREDESCU, Special Representative of the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office to BSEC, Minister Plenipotentiary, Consulate General of Romania in Istanbul.
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
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. 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

6. 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, 7-8 April 2015).

7. The Working Group considered, amended and agreed upon the evaluation report on the activities of the Working Group covering the period from 1 July 2013 - 30 June 2015, prepared by Ukraine as the Country-Coordinator for that period, and decided to submit it to the next meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to Ukraine for the work done as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism for the above mentioned period. The evaluation report is attached as **Annex III**.

ACTION TAKEN OR TO BE TAKEN WITH REGARD TO THE SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM COOPERATION AREAS

8. The BSEC PERMIS presented brief information on the sub-items under this agenda item.

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

9. The Working Group adopted the Action Plan on the implementation of the Athens Declaration adopted by the Ministers in charge of Tourism of the BSEC Member States (Athens, 23 October 2014) as a guiding document for further consideration of issues of Gastronomy and Wine Tourism and of Film-induced Tourism, and decided to submit it to the next meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials. The Action Plan is attached as **Annex IV**.

10. The representative of the Russian Federation informed about the latest developments in the sphere of gastronomy tourism and, in particular that the Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation carried out a pilot project “Russian Gastronomy Week” in Madrid, from 1-6 October 2015.

c) Maritime and Nautical Tourism.

11. The representative of Ukraine informed that the Concept of the project on “*Development of Cruise Tourism in the BSEC Region*” will have to be adjusted in view of the new situation in the Black Sea Region according to international law and provisions of the relevant resolution of United Nations General Assembly and the Ukrainian legislation.

12. The Working Group took note of the information presented by the BSEC PERMIS on the project proposal on ‘*Small cruise and yachting style tourism*’, received from the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), and requested the BSEC PERMIS to remain in touch with the proponents of the Project with a view to exploring the participation of BSEC in the project, and to report on the outcome at the next meeting of the Working Group.

d) Balneology, Wellness and Spa Tourism

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

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

14. The Working Group took note of the updated information on the proposal regarding the University Environment Integration for Specialist Training in Tourism Sphere of the Black Sea Region, provided by the delegation of the Russian Federation.

15. The Russian Federation intends to prepare a concept paper on the proposal, to be circulated in advance of the next meeting of the Working Group.

f) Youth and Sports issues

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

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

a. Discussion of the existing proposals

b. Future developments:

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

17. The BSEC PERMIS informed that the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States (Chisinau, 18 June 2015) invited the Working Groups, in the second half of 2015, to redefine or confirm the priority areas of the “Economic Agenda 2012” preferably not more than three themes for each Goal for the next medium-term (2016-2018), to identify the envisaged deliverables/projects and to submit timely (by December 2015) their Medium-Term (2013-2015) Achievements Reports.

18. The Working Group 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 Committee of Senior Officials. The Achievements Report is attached as **Annex V**.

19. The Working Group also considered the priorities of the “BSEC Economic Agenda 2012” on cooperation in tourism and, in addition to already chosen priority on ‘further strengthening cooperation of the Member States in the field of tourism, including enhancing dialogue on facilitation of visa procedures’, decided to focus in the next medium-term (2016-2018) on the following priorities:

-Promoting the joint marketing campaign of the BSEC Member States, *inter alia*, by participating in international tourism exhibitions, fairs and festivals; and,

-Encouraging Cultural tourism/Cultural route projects in the Black Sea Region and their implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE BSEC AND THE UNWTO

20. The Working Group considered the draft Action Plan on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between BSEC and UNWTO, prepared by BSEC PERMIS, and invited the Member States to send their comments/proposals on the Draft by 1 December 2015. The draft Action Plan is attached as **Annex VI**.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FRAMEWORKS OF BSEC TOURISM COOPERATION

21. The Working Group took note of the proposals on “*A Common BSEC Tourism Marketing Council*” (Georgia) and “*A Branding of the Black Sea Region*” (Republic of Bulgaria) and invited the two proponents to inform the BSEC PERMIS whether they intend to further continue the consideration of these two proposals. If the proponents decide to continue, they will be invited to submit substantive papers on the issues.

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

22. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed on the possibility of setting up an inventory of best practices / initiatives, programmes and information concerning the promotion of gastronomy and wine tourism as well as of film-induced tourism. A template of best practices could be elaborated and circulated among the Member States with a view to collecting and processing data related to the alternative forms of tourism in question.

23. The representative of the Hellenic Republic also informed on the legal framework for operating tourism enterprises focusing on the enhancement and promotion of thematic tourism products such as wine tourism, medical tourism and agro-tourism.

24. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria informed that since 2005 a total of 26 large tourism projects have received governmental support by having been granted an investment certificate which brings those projects some kind of incentives like infrastructure subsidies, individual administrative assistance, shortening of procedure terms for issuing construction licences etc. According to the Bulgarian Tourism Act, the Ministry of Tourism will continue to support significant investment projects in the tourism sector.

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

25. The representative of the Hellenic Republic informed on the following events to be held in Greece:

- Philoxenia: the 31st International Tourism Exhibition, 12-15 November 2015, Thessaloniki
- Greek Tourism Expo: the 2nd International Tourism Fair, 4-6 December 2015, Athens
- Detrop: the 25th International Exhibition of Food, Beverages, Machinery Equipment and Packaging, 26-29 February 2016, Thessaloniki
- Food Expo Greece: the 3rd International Food and Beverages Exhibition, 19-21 March 2016, Athens
- Oenotelia: the 2nd Trade Fair Wine and Spirits, 19-21 March 2016, Athens

26. The representative of the Russian Federation informed on the International Conference on Tourism, to be supposedly held in June 2016 in Sochi. The additional information on the event will be provided in due course.

27. The representative of the Republic of Serbia informed on the following events to be held in Serbia:

- Tourism Investment Forum, 23-25 October 2015, Belgrade
- Fair on Rural Tourism, 26-29 November 2015, Kragujevac
- The 38th International Tourism Fair, 18-21 February 2016, Belgrade

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

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

29. 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), and on the Guidelines for the BSEC Project Management Unit.

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

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

31. The Working Group welcomed the expression of intent by the Republic of Bulgaria to assume the position of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group which has been vacant as of 1 July 2015.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

32. 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.