

**WORKSHOP ON
“OUR COLLABORATION POINT: COMMERCIAL REGISTRY”**

BSEC Headquarters, 19-20 April 2017

Summary Proceedings

1. The Workshop on “Our Collaboration Point: Commercial Registry” was held at the BSEC Headquarters on 19-20 April 2017. It was jointly organized by the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS) and the Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey (MCT).
2. The Workshop was attended by participants from the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
3. The List of Participants and the Agenda of the Workshop are attached as **Annex I** and **Annex II**, respectively.
4. The Workshop was chaired by Mr. Siddik KAYA, Head of Department, General Directorate of Domestic Trade, Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey Turkey.
5. Welcoming remarks were made by Mr. Siddik KAYA, Head of Department, General Directorate of Domestic Trade, Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey and Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS.
 - 5.1. Mr. Siddik KAYA welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of the commercial registry as a proven tool for development of international exchanges of SMEs as well as for international trade and economic relations. He further noted that each BSEC Member State has its own experience in the sphere of commercial registry and it would be useful if the Member States would get acquainted with each others practice and hold exchange of information to that end. He also emphasized a need to develop cooperation ties

between the BSEC Member States in this concrete area in order to contribute to the regional trade and economic cooperation in future.

5.2. Ambassador M. CHRISTIDES welcomed the participants of the Workshop on behalf of the BSEC PERMIS. He expressed appreciation to the Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey for initiation and organization of the Workshop. The Secretary General provided the participants with information on BSEC and the activities of the Organization. Stressing the significance of the theme of the Workshop, the Secretary General mentioned that the commercial registries are indispensable means to guarantee legal certainty for physical and legal entities engaged in a commercial activity. He underscored that it is high time for the BSEC Member States to exchange views and share their best experiences in order to coordinate their efforts in cooperating with each other in the relevant areas. He also expressed the hope that important findings and conclusions will come out at the end of the Workshop, which will lead in future to the elaboration of regional projects.

6. After the welcoming remarks presentations on the theme of the Workshop were made by:

6.1. Mr. Mehmet Ali ORAN, EU Expert, Directorate General for the EU and External Relations, MCT of the Republic of Turkey, on the Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey. The participants were informed on the vision, mission and duties of the Ministry as well as on its activities. The presentation is attached as **Annex III**.

6.2. Mr. Muhammed Ali ÇELİK, Assistant Customs and Trade Expert, MCT of the Republic of Turkey, on “*International Cooperation among the Trade Registry Bodies*”. The presentation focused on the ways and means of cooperation established within the relevant international structures in the field, such as CRF, ECRF and IACA. The presentation is attached as **Annex IV**.

6.3 Ms. Enhela SHEHU, Specialist, Directorate of Research and Methodological Leadership, National Business Center of the Republic of Albania, on “*Commercial Registry in Albania*”. The participants were informed on National Registration Center, registration method, documentation required for initial registration, overall registration and de-registration procedures as well as on new developments in the area up from 2013. The presentation is attached as **Annex V**.

6.4. Mr. Samir SEYIDAHMADLI, Director, Division for State Registration of Legal Entities, Department of National Revenue, Ministry of Taxes of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on “*One-Stop Shop*”. Mr. SEYIDAHMADLI focused on the ways and means of the registration in the Republic of Azerbaijan, touching upon the issues related to unique code – TIN, procedures and documents concerning the registration, e-registration, as well as on advantages and facilitation one-stop shop approach has created for the public and private sectors in Azerbaijan. The presentation is attached as **Annex VI**.

6.5. Ms. Nino MESKHI, Manager, Business Registration Division, Department for Registration of Entrepreneurs and Legal Entities, National Agency of Public Registry, Ministry of Justice of Georgia, on “*Introduction of Georgian Registry of Entrepreneurs and Non-entrepreneurial (Non-commercial) Legal Entities*”. Ms. MESKHI informed on the Georgian business registry, company types, one-stop-shop principle and registration procedures. She also focused on the electronic services of the Agency, transparency of the

registered data and additional services that allow customers to register legal entities faster and cheaper. Information about practices towards the registration of the branches of foreign companies and non-commercial organizations was also provided during the presentation. The presentation is attached as **Annex VII**.

6.6. Mr. Recep BOZER, Customs and Trade Expert, MCT of the Republic of Turkey, on Centralized Registration System (MERSIS) in Turkey. Mr. BOZER informed on the history of the establishment of MERSIS, its goals, information available in the MERSIS data base, on the ways the system functioning etc. The presentation is attached as **Annex VIII**.

6.7. Ms. Nur ÖZCAN, Attorney at Law, Istanbul Trade Registry Directorate, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, on “*Economy and Trade Registry Practice in Turkey*”. Ms. ÖZCAN’s presentation was focused mainly on the legal aspects of the trade registry in Turkey and the place of Istanbul Trade Registry in the overall picture. The presentation elaborated also on the issues related to the legal side of establishing companies with foreign capital as well as branches of foreign legal entities in Turkey. The presentation is attached as **Annex IX**.

7. During the Workshop Mr. Sıddık KAYA briefed the participants on trade registry practice of the European Union and elaborated on some legal and the procedural aspects of it. In his brief he also touched upon the relevant practices of the EU countries on re-domicilation of the companies.

8. Questions and Answers, comments and exchanges of views and experiences followed each presentation, resulting in conclusions and recommendations for the future activities of the BSEC Organization and its Member States regarding the commercial registry.

9. On the second day a cultural program was organized for the participants of the Workshop.

Conclusions

10. The participants made the following points in conclusion:

10.1. The Commercial Registry in the BSEC Region underwent in recent years serious reforming process to better serve the interests of public and private sectors.

10.2. It was extremely useful to exchange views and experiences in the sphere of commercial registry so that to define how far each participating Member State reached in modernization its registry services.

10.3. The country presentations made were instrumental to conclude that the Member States digitalized their registry services, operating mainly on one-stop shop approach. They should continue their work to find out possible ways to further simplify the process of registration as well as to shorten the time span required for the registration.

10.4. The country presentations revealed that the list of documents required for the registration in the BSEC Member States varies from country to country.

Recommendations

11. The following recommendations were made:

11.1. The BSEC Member States are encouraged to exchange information on the companies wishing to establish a branch in the territory of the other Member State.

11.2. A reference to the relevant websites/links of the Member States related to their commercial registry services should be made in the official website of the BSEC Organization.

11.3. To exchange statistics on the companies or branches of companies of the BSEC Member States registered in the territory of the other Member States.

11.4. In order to study/compare the practice of the Member States in establishing the foreign company branches, the commercial registry authorities should exchange the list of documents required for that purpose in each BSEC Member State.

11.5. To consider an appointment of a focal point from each BSEC Member State to establish a proper network in the relevant sphere in future.

11.6. To consider inclusion of the cooperation among the commercial registries of the BSEC Member States into the BSEC's regular agenda.

11.7. In order to continue close contacts and cooperation among the commercial registry authorities, the Member States should consider mutual visits as one of the means to exchange best practices and experience.

11.8. Broader participation from the BSEC Member States in the activities which will be organized in the framework of BSEC.

12. The participants expressed their deep gratitude to the BSEC PERMIS and the Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey for the realization of the Workshop and for the warm hospitality extended to them during their stay in Istanbul.