



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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

Istanbul, BSEC Headquarters, 4-5 October 2012

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education was held in Istanbul, at the BSEC Headquarters, on 4-5 October 2012.
2. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Serdar YILMAZ, Head of Section, and Mr. İmdat PEKDEMİR, Head of Department, Directorate General of European Union and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey.
3. The following BSEC Member States participated in the Meeting:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Turkey
Ukraine
4. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the BSEC (PABSEC) participated in the Meeting as BSEC Related Body.
5. The representative of the United States of America attended the Meeting as the BSEC Observer.
6. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex I.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. 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 BSEC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THE FOLLOW-UP OF THE DECLARATIONS AND JOINT STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF EDUCATION

8. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS representative on the implementation of the Resolutions, Decisions and Recommendations of the Council and the Declarations and the Statements of the Ministers in charge of Education since the last Meeting of the Working Group on Education (Istanbul, November 2010).

9. The Working Group reiterated its commitment to continue considering ways and means of implementing the provisions of the BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership and the BSEC Joint Athens Declaration (2005).

10. During the consideration of the ways and means on how to improve the effectiveness of the activities of the Working Group, the following proposals and suggestions were advanced for further consideration by the Working Group:

- the need for the Working Group to focus on the main priorities in its future work;
- merging Working Group on Education with the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology;
- greater use of the portal of Higher Education for the BSEC Region.

11. Since only two Member States nominated so far their Focal Points to the Working Group, the Member States who have not done so yet, were requested to expedite their nominations. As soon as all the nominations are received, PERMIS will circulate the complete list to the Member States.

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

12. 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 14 of the Economic Agenda on Higher Standards in Education and Training, the “Working Groups’ Programme Implementation and Impact Survey” and the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey”, communicated to the Member States.

13. 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 invite the Country-Coordinator to update the Terms of Reference and elaborate the draft Plan of Action to be considered at the next Meeting of the Group, on the basis of the outcome of the Survey and the goals of the BSEC Economic Agenda.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BSEC PUBLIC COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

14. The Working Group took note of information provided by the BSEC PERMIS Executive Manager in charge of media regarding the newly adopted BSEC Public Communication Strategy.

15. 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.

16. 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 start after the results of the “Medium-Term (2013-2015) Orientation Survey” are processed and shared with the Member States, which will enable the Working Group to identify the specific areas where it will focus its work.

RE-ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS RELATIVE TO PRIORITIES AND LONG STANDING ISSUES:

- a) Follow-up of the exchange of views on cooperation in development of national frameworks of qualifications with aim to secure compatibility of the educational systems in the BSEC region;**

17. The Working Group decided to defer the consideration of this sub-item to its next Meeting.

- b) Follow-up on creation of a network and a web-site (portal);**

18. The representative of the Hellenic Republic delivered a presentation on the Portal for Education in the BSEC (www.bsec-edu.tuc.gr). She invited the Member States to make greater use of the possibilities offered by the Portal and to update the relevant National information.

- c) Follow-up on investigation of the possibility of elaborating joint programs of postgraduate studies and Universities research**

19. The participants agreed that joint programs of postgraduate studies and Universities research should be strengthened and that information on this issue should be shared.

- d) Investigation on possibility of elaborating joint programs related to Lifelong Learning between relevant institutions in BSEC Member States**

20. The representative of the Republic of Turkey delivered a presentation on Lifelong Learning in Turkey, attached as Annex III.

21. The representative of the Hellenic Republic delivered a presentation on Lifelong Learning in Greece, attached as Annex IV.

22. The representatives of the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey expressed readiness of their respective authorities to cooperate and share the relevant information with interested Member States.

23. The representative of the Republic of Turkey invited the Member States to attend the Lifelong Learning International Conference, to be held in Istanbul, on 13-15 November 2012.

e) Quality Assurance in Higher Education

24. The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed that the Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education, scheduled for June 2011, was not held. The Republic of Turkey is considering the possibility to organize the Conference in the future.

f) Use of information and Communication Technology in Education

25. The representative of the Republic of Turkey delivered a presentation on a project “FATIH: Increasing Opportunities and Move of Implementing the Technology”, attached as Annex V.

COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

26. The participants took note of the information provided by the BSEC PERMIS Executive Manager in charge of media on the latest developments in cooperation between BSEC and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

27. The Working Group took note of information by the BSEC PERMIS representative on the outcome of Workshop on “Entrepreneurial Education for SMEs” (Belgrade, 13-15 October 2010), jointly organized by the BSEC PERMIS and the Representation of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Foundation) (KAS) in Turkey, on the “Conference on Governance for Sustainable Development”, organized by the Romanian Chairmanship-in-Office of BSEC (Constanta, Romania, 16-19 March 2011), and on a Declaration on “Education and Governance for Sustainable Development”.

28. The Working Group took note of information provided by the PERMIS on the developments regarding the UNDP regional project “Every Drop Matters” and the educational kit entitled “Black Sea Box”.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND (PDF)

29. The Working Group took note of information provided by PERMIS representative on the need to discuss and define priority project areas for the Project Development Fund.

30. The Working Group invited the Member States to submit to PERMIS by 31 December 2012 their proposals on the priority project areas for the Project Development Fund.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

31. The representative of BSEC PERMIS recalled that since last Ministerial Meeting on Education was held in 2005, the Member States may consider a possibility of organizing next one in 2013.

32. The Working Group took note of information regarding the Training Program for Junior Diplomats from the BSEC Member States which will be organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, in Ankara and Istanbul from 26 November -

2 December 2012 (circulated by the PERMIS Note No: BS/INFO.2012.0635 dated 26 September 2012).

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

33. The Working Group adopted the present Report for the submission to the next Meeting of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the BSEC Member States.