



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WG/CS&T/R(2024)2

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Online, 25 September 2024

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held online on 25 September 2024.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Igor CHIOSA, Acting Head, Research and Innovation Policy Department, Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova.
3. Opening remarks were made by the BSEC PERMIS First Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Merve Safa KAVAKCI and Mr. Igor CHIOSA on behalf of Country-Coordinator.
4. The meeting was attended by representatives from the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Republic of Türkiye
Ukraine
5. The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC attended the meeting as the BSEC Related Body.
6. The representative of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) attended the meeting as the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
7. The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as **Annex I**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as **Annex II**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UPDATED BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA “TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE OF THE WIDER BLACK SEA AREA”

9. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the importance of the implementation of the BSEC Economic Agenda, more precisely the relevant provisions listed in ***GOAL II: Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology***, as a platform for a more productive, effective and constructive cooperation for achieving tangible results.

10. In this context, the BSEC PERMIS recalled the necessity of consolidating the project-oriented dimension of BSEC activities by implementing existing and identifying new projects of common interest to Member States to reinforce economic cooperation in the region.

11. Furthermore, the Working Group invited interested Member States to send their concrete proposals in written form to serve as guidelines for the Secretariat to prepare a short-term priorities platform for a stronger cooperation in the framework of the Working Group, while fully reflecting the above provisions of the updated Economic Agenda.

12. In addition, the Secretariat briefed on the seventh edition of the Workshop for Young Diplomats from the BSEC Member States on “*Enabling Sustainable Blue Economy in the wider Black Sea region*”, jointly organized by the BSEC PERMIS and the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation Türkiye (KAS), held on 3-5 July 2024 in Sofia.

AGENDA ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 JULY 2024 – 30 JUNE 2026 DEVELOPED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, THE CURRENT COUNTRY-COORDINATOR OF THE WORKING GROUP

13. The delegation of the Republic of Moldova, the current Country-Coordinator, elaborated and presented the draft *Plan of Action of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology* covering the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026.

14. The Working Group considered and approved the presented Plan of Action for its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO). The Action Plan, as approved by the Working Group, is attached as **Annex III**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL “BLUE PORT INDEX FOR THE BSEC COUNTRIES”

15. In line with the outcomes of the last Meeting of the Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology held online on 30 May 2024, the Working Group considered the project proposal “*Blue Port Index for the BSEC Countries*” (acronym – “Blue for Black”), submitted by partners from the Republic of Türkiye (Lead Partner), the Republic of Bulgaria and Georgia, as well as the Preliminary Evaluation of the above project prepared by PERMIS in accordance with Article 16 of the PDF Manual of Operations.

16. The representative of the Bursa Technical University (BTU) made a presentation on the project proposal, which is attached as **Annex IV**. It was underlined that the “Blue Port Index” aims to contribute to the regional economy through a technology-based index by increasing the competitiveness of the Black Sea ports, which are one of the important centers of global maritime transportation, through a clean, sustainable and environmentally friendly approach. The “Blue Port Index”, which is designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of ports in terms of environmental management and sustainability of their operations, will play an important role in shaping the policy measures to be taken by revealing the current state of the performance of the Black Sea ports within the framework of the blue economy. The sustainable development of the blue economy offers a number of opportunities for the BSEC countries, which include increasing employment, ensuring economic diversification and strengthening environmental sustainability.

17. Following the remarks of the representatives of the project partners, the Working Group evaluated the said Project in conformity with the key priority actions and requirements set in the BSEC Economic Agenda “Towards a sustainable future of the wider Black Sea area”, more precisely in its Goal 11: Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology, and acknowledging the importance for the BSEC Member States of the sustainable growth in marine and maritime sectors, expressed its support for the project. The Working Group agreed that the “Blue Port Index” planned within the scope of the project, can be considered an innovative approach to promoting environmental sustainability and efficiency in the maritime sector, assessing port performance in various areas such as waste management, energy use, water quality and biodiversity.

18. Pursuant to the provisions of the of the Article 16 of the PDF Manual of Operation, the Working Group positively assessed the Project Proposal “*Blue Port Index for the BSEC Countries*” and recommended its submission to the Committee of Senior Officials for its consideration and endorsement. The Standard Application for funding the Project “*Blue Port Index for BSEC Countries*”, as approved by the Working Group, is attaches as **Annex V**.

19. The delegation of the Russian Federation supported the project proposal, underlining the importance of developing common approaches on the blue economy in the Black Sea region in line with the BSEC Economic Agenda and establishing mechanism and criteria of Blue Port Index on an inclusive basis with participation of all interested Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 5: RECENT DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

20. In this framework, the following delegations took the floor: the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Türkiye and Ukraine, providing a comprehensive overview of the latest developments in their Countries on a wide range of issues in the field of Science and Technology.

21. The Working Group took note of the presentations and statements under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 6: COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

22. The representative of the *Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC* (PABSEC) informed regarding their relevant activities and priorities in the area of Science and Technology.

23. The representative of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) provided information on their upcoming activities.

24. The representative of the Burgas Free University informed about their upcoming event “From the Danube source to Black Sea; Healthy waters and healthy life”, scheduled for October 15, 2024 in Burgas (Bulgaria) and invited those interested to participate.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

25. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

26. The Working Group adopted the Report of the Meeting to be submitted to the next Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials.