



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WG/ED/R(2024)2

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

Online, 9 December 2024

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Education was held online on 9 December 2024.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Maria FASSARI, Head, International Relation Department, Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports of the Hellenic Republic.
3. Opening Remarks were made by:

Ambassador Dimitrios RALLIS, Deputy Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS on behalf of the Secretariat;

Ms. Maria FASSARI, on behalf of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group.
4. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following BSEC Member States:
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Hellenic Republic
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Türkiye
Ukraine
5. The representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt attended the meeting as the BSEC Observer.
6. The representative of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) 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 14: Higher Standard in Education and Training***, as a platform for a more productive, effective and constructive cooperation for achieving tangible results.

10. To this end, 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. The BSEC PERMIS welcomed the written contributions of the delegations of the Hellenic Republic and Romania in this context and recalled its call on Member States to communicate relevant national objectives and policies by the end of the calendar year at the latest, on the bases of which a list of priorities of the Working Group will be composed, and an Implementation Report on the fulfilment of the above provisions of the updated Economic Agenda will be prepared.

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: DIGITAL DEVICES IN SCHOOLS: USE FOR LEISURE AND EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

13. The Working Group discussed the opportunities and challenges of using digital devices in education. Some of the key findings in this context were as follows:

- Digital technologies hold immense potential to revolutionize education and empower learners worldwide. The digital classroom, utilizing electronic devices and software, transforms traditional education through computers and the Internet, allowing for more efficient learning and progress tracking;

- By leveraging digital tools effectively, educators can create engaging, personalized learning experiences that cater to diverse student needs;

- The digital environment offers educational opportunities but also presents risks such as cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content and privacy concerns. Protecting student privacy, and ensuring data security become top priorities. Finding a balance between the benefits of technology and privacy concerns is necessary to establish trust and maintain a secure learning environment;

- Excessive reliance on digital technologies may diminish critical thinking skills and hinder students' ability to engage with material offline. Balancing digital and traditional teaching methods is crucial to ensure a well-rounded education that fosters creativity and independent thinking;

- Likewise, developing instructional design and digital skills in teacher training programs is equally important, as is the exchange of best practices in this area.

AGENDA ITEM 4: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

14. Under this Agenda Item, the representatives of the Hellenic Republic, Romania and the Republic of Türkiye informed on their national activities in the respective field of cooperation.

15. Referring to the ideas and proposals put forward in the presentations and statements under this Agenda Item, the Chair proposed to consider addressing the issue of school violence and bullying at one of the next meetings of the Working Group.

AGENDA ITEM 5: COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

16. The BSEC PERMIS reiterated the importance of further enhancing interaction and cooperation with other regional and international organizations and partners in the field of education.

AGENDA ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

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