ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WG/CS&T/R(2026)1

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

10 November 2026, online

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology was held online on 10 November 2026.

2. The Meeting was moderated by Ms. Sandra VUJINOVIC, BSEC PERMIS Executive Manager.

3. The Opening Remarks were delivered by Ambassador Dr. Merve Safa KAVAKCI, First Deputy Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS on behalf of the Secretariat.

4. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:
   Republic of Armenia
   Republic of Bulgaria
   Georgia
   Hellenic Republic
   Romania
   Russian Federation
   Republic of Türkiye
   Ukraine

5. The following BSEC Related Bodies attended the Meeting:

   Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC)
   International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)

6. The representative of the Bursa Technical University attended the meeting as a Guest.

7. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

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: EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOAL 11: "STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY" OF THE BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA

9. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the state of implementation of the BSEC Economic Agenda, with particular reference to the relevant provisions under *Goal 11: "Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology"*. In this context, BSEC PERMIS underlined the importance of aligning the activities of the Working Group with the recommendations set out in the first Progress Report of the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General on the Implementation of the BSEC Economic Agenda (December 2025).

10. BSEC PERMIS welcomed the written contributions submitted by Member States, outlining their national objectives and policies in the field of science and technology and putting forward proposals for cooperation, and invited the Working Group to duly consider these contributions in the context of its future work.

11. The Secretariat recalled that the position of Country-Coordinator for the Working Group had remained vacant since 1 July 2026 and kindly invited interested Member States to consider assuming this important role.

12. The Secretariat also recalled that 2027 will mark the 35th anniversary of the BSEC, representing an important milestone in the history and development of the Organization. In this regard, the Secretariat invited the Member States to put forward concrete proposals on appropriate ways to commemorate this significant anniversary and encouraged them to take it duly into consideration when planning and organizing relevant activities and events at the national level, with a view to ensuring its meaningful and visible commemoration.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADVANCING REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

13. The Working Group continued its exchange of views on national developments and best practices in the field, highlighting relevant experiences and approaches with potential for further sharing and cooperation among Member States within the BSEC framework.

14. Within this framework, the representative of the Russian Federation outlined the country's priorities in science, technology and innovation, as set out in the Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development (2024) and the Concept of International Scientific and Technical Cooperation (2025). The representative highlighted the development of mega-science projects, climate research initiatives and international cooperation in carbon monitoring and informed of the launch of over 40 calls for research proposals, resulting in funding for more than 260 applied research projects involving foreign partners, and presented national initiatives in artificial intelligence, digital transformation and specialist training.

15. In addition, the representative of the Russian Federation highlighted the potential of digital technologies and artificial intelligence to facilitate scientific dialogue and cooperation among BSEC Member States in the framework of Goal 11 of the BSEC Economic Agenda. Referring to examples of AI-based research and university-industry cooperation in the Russian Federation, the representative proposed the establishment of a *BSEC Science Match Initiative* to facilitate the exchange of information on research priorities, institutional expertise and potential cooperation opportunities. The representative further suggested developing and circulating a common template for collecting national information and best practices in science, technology and innovation, as a first step towards establishing a regional overview and, subsequently, a shared digital directory or knowledge base.

16. The representative of the Republic of Bulgaria highlighted the country's participation in the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership and the forthcoming signing of the Convention establishing the Mercator Ocean International Centre. The representative proposed establishing a shared directory of national contact persons and a calendar of scientific events, followed by a mapping exercise of relevant national institutions, programmes and initiatives, as a basis for identifying cooperation opportunities and organizing a regional conference with matchmaking sessions in 2027. The representative also highlighted Bulgaria's Antarctic research activities, including its 35th Antarctic Expedition and cooperation with the Republic of Türkiye, the Hellenic Republic and Romania, and announced the forthcoming First Balkan Polar Conference in Aheloy, the Republic of Bulgaria, as a model to be replicated in the context of the BSEC.

17. The representative of the Republic of Türkiye presented the National Artificial Intelligence Action Plan 2026–2030, outlining its four pillars and key actions related to AI literacy, talent development, computing infrastructure, research, innovation and international cooperation. The representative also highlighted the envisaged governance framework and three funding instruments supporting research, commercialisation and private-sector investment, and identified potential links with the BSEC Economic Agenda, particularly in digital transformation, education and regional cooperation.

AGENDA ITEM 4: INFORMING ON THE ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PDF PROJECT "BLUE PORT INDEX FOR BSEC COUNTRIES"

18. The Working Group took note of the information provided by BSEC PERMIS regarding the ongoing implementation of the PDF Project "Blue Port Index for BSEC Countries".

19. The representative of Bursa Technical University, the Project Lead Partner, provided an overview of the progress made in the implementation of the project, highlighting the outcomes of the project partners' meetings held in Bursa, Türkiye, on 8–9 December 2025, in Batumi, Georgia, on 14 May 2026, and in Burgas, Bulgaria, on 30 September 2026. The presentation also included the *Blue for Black* project website, established to support the project's presentation and visibility, and outlined prospects for the further development and application of the project's outcomes.

20. The Working Group took note of the progress presented by the Project Lead Partner.

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

21. BSEC PERMIS underlined the importance of further strengthening cooperation with external partners, including relevant international and regional organizations, universities, research institutions and the business community, in this field.

AGENDA ITEM 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

23. The Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology adopted the present Report for its submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.