ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

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REPORT
OF THE MEETING
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP
ON COOPERATION IN TOURISM

13 November 2026, online

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism was held online on 13 November 2026.

2. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Anushik AVETYAN, Chairperson of the Tourism Committee of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia.

3. The Opening Remarks were made by:

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

- Ms. Anushik AVETYAN, on behalf of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group.

4. Both speakers agreed on the need to make better use of the tourism potential of the wider Black Sea region, join efforts to advance the development of the sector and strengthen the region's international positioning as an attractive destination for visitors from around the world.

5. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Georgia
Hellenic Republic
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Republic of Türkiye
Ukraine

6. The representative of the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) attended the meeting as the BSEC Related Body.

7. The representative of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) attended the meeting as the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner.

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

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. 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 8: "DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM, PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PROMOTION OF MODERN CULTURE" OF THE BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA

10. 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 8: Development of Tourism, Protection of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Modern Culture*. 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).

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

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 and regional level, with a view to ensuring its meaningful and visible commemoration.

13. Following the deliberations, the Working Group decided to continue its consideration of this item at its next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3: STRENGTHENING REGIONAL TOURISM COOPERATION AND PROMOTING THE BSEC REGION AS A DIVERSE AND CONNECTED DESTINATION

14. 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.

15. Within this framework, the representative of the Republic of Armenia outlined the Government's key priorities for tourism development, including the implementation of the Tourism Development Strategy 2026–2030, investment in regional tourism infrastructure, support for hotel and health resort development, and improved air connectivity. The representative also highlighted measures to implement the Law on Tourism, increase international arrivals, strengthen international promotion, and support tourism-related events.

16. Furthermore, the representative of the Republic of Armenia proposed three priority areas for further cooperation among BSEC Member States: the development and joint promotion of multi-country thematic tourism itineraries; the exchange of good practices in sustainable rural and community-based tourism; and enhanced information-sharing on tourism investment opportunities, incentives and support mechanisms, with a view to fostering business partnerships and investment across the region.

17. The delegation of Ukraine made a statement.

18. The representative of the Russian Federation delivered a statement, and welcomed the proposals put forward by the delegation of the Republic of Armenia, in its capacity as Country-Coordinator of the Working Group, as a basis for exploring further areas of cooperation.

AGENDA ITEM 4: COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

19. The representative of *the International Centre for Black Sea Studies* (ICBSS) updated the Working Group on the progress and key outputs of the TOURAL Project, with particular reference to its digital tools and final event.

20. The representative of the *Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe* (CPMR), *Balkan and Black Sea Commission* (BBSC), presented an overview of several EU-funded tourism projects, including TOURISMO, Regenera4MED, Community4Tourism, NaTour4CChange and HERIT-DATA, highlighting their focus on sustainable and regenerative tourism, climate resilience, tourism flow management and cultural heritage protection. The representative also emphasized opportunities for exchanging good practices and adapting relevant project approaches to the wider Black Sea region and BSEC Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 5: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

21. No discussion was held under this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 6: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

22. The Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism adopted the present Report for its submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.