



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat

BS/WGCT/R(2024)

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

Online, 7 May 2024

1. The Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism was held online on 7 May 2024.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Jalil MALIKOV, Deputy Head of Administration, Head of International Relations Department, State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
3. Opening Remarks were made by:

Mr. Jalil MALIKOV, on behalf of the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group;
Ms. Sandra VUJINOVIC, Executive Manager of the BSEC PERMIS, on behalf of the Secretariat.
4. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following BSEC Member States:

Republic of Albania
Republic of Armenia
Republic of Azerbaijan
Republic of Bulgaria
Georgia
Republic of Moldova
Republic of North Macedonia
Russian Federation
Republic of Serbia
Republic of Türkiye
Ukraine
5. The representative of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) attended the meeting as the BSEC Sectoral Dialogue Partner.
6. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex I** to the present Report.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. 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 PROVISIONS OF THE BSEC ECONOMIC AGENDA TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE OF THE WIDER BLACK SEA AREA

8. The BSEC PERMIS informed on the “*BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards a sustainable future of the wider Black Sea area*”, adopted by the 47th BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs at an online meeting on 15 December 2023, as a framework strategy document for guiding the cooperation in the BSEC framework in the years to come.

9. In this context, *Goal 8* of the Economic Agenda on *Development of Tourism, Protection of Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Modern Culture*, which outlines short- and medium-term priorities and actions in the aforementioned domain, was highlighted.

10. In order to ensure tangible results, the Secretariat invited Member States to submit to PERMIS by the end of the calendar year information on their relevant measures and national policies aimed at achieving the set goals and objectives in the above context. Based on the received inputs, an Implementation Report will be prepared.

AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 JANUARY 2023 – 31 DECEMBER 2024 DEVELOPED BY THE STATE TOURISM AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, THE CURRENT COUNTRY-COORDINATOR OF THE WORKING GROUP

11. The Working Group considered the *draft Action Plan of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism*, developed by the Republic of Azerbaijan, as the Country-Coordinator of the Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism for the period of 1 July 2023 – 31 December 2024. In this context, the proposals on the draft Plan submitted by the Ministry of Tourism of the Hellenic Republic in the Verbal Note Ref: 60719 of 8 November 2023 were welcomed. No other proposals by other Member States have been submitted.

12. The Working Group was not able to reach a consensus on the adopting of the draft Plan of Action of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism and therefore decided to continue the consideration of the matter. The draft Plan of Action as revised is attached as **Annex III**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: INFORMING ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE FIRST MEETING OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS SPECIALIZED IN TOURISM EDUCATION IN THE BSEC REGION, BAKU, 22-23 APRIL 2024

13. In this context, the Working Group took note of the information provided by the representatives of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Secretariat on the First Meeting of the Higher Education Institutions Specialized in Tourism Education in the BSEC Region, held in Baku on 22-23 April 2024.

14. The participants expressed appreciation to the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the excellent organization of the event and for the warm hospitality extended.

AGENDA ITEM 5: EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TOURISM SECTOR IN THE BSEC REGION: EXPLORING POTENTIAL FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIP

15. The Working Group took note of the information provided by the following delegations: the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine under this Agenda item.

16. In addition, the Secretariat informed about the participation of the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Lazăr COMĂNESCU, in 70th meeting of the UN Tourism Commission for Europe (CEU), and conference on Tourism Investment and Economic Development in Europe organized on the sidelines of the aforementioned event, in Tirana, on 7-9 April 2024.

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

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

AGENDA ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

18. The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed that this country has been chosen to host the next meeting of the UN Tourism Commission for Europe (CEU) in Baku in the spring of 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

19. 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.