



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

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Annex VII to BS/ED/R(2018)1

## PLAN OF ACTION OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP ON EDUCATION

1 January 2018 - 31 December 2019

Country-Coordinator 2018-2019: The Russian Federation

### 1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Guided by the principles of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, set by the United Nations, and “**The BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced Partnership**”, adopted by the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States in Belgrade on 11 June 2012, the Working Group agrees, where relevant, on the following general objectives:

- *Promote* exchange of information, experience and best practices in the field of education to answer global challenges, that will shape the future of education, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- *Encourage* modernization of the educational systems in the BSEC Member States in the context of transformation of the labor market and increasing demand for specific set of skills in the digital economy, to increase sustainable growth and the establishment of knowledge-based societies.
- *Share* best practices in quality assurance and develop a qualifications framework in higher education.
- *Enhance* cooperation in the field of vocational training, based on the principle of dual education, among the BSEC Member States.
- *Promote* lifelong learning opportunities through joint programmes among the relevant institutions of the BSEC Member States.
- *Further improve* the exchange of information in the field of higher education through a BSEC Educational Portal.
- *Promote* scientific and educational initiatives and research contributing to sustainable development of the BSEC Region.

- *Intensify* international and regional cooperation among government, business and academic communities of the BSEC Member States, ensuring synergy and enhancing interconnection of education, science and business.
- *Promote* and support the development of joint academic programmes between universities of the BSEC Region.
- *Enhance* the exchange of information in the development of policies for recognizing the results of previous self-education, formal and informal education.
- *Encourage* academic exchange and mobility of students, teachers, researchers and young scientists among the BSEC Member States, inter alia, through bilateral and multilateral agreements and scholarships among higher education institutions.
- *Encourage* double degree and network types of educational programs to increase BSEC Member States alumni's future competencies.
- *Develop* partnerships under initiatives of the United Nations and other international organizations aiming at university cooperation on sustainability, including public-private partnerships in the field of education.
- *Enhance* the BSEC Member States cooperation with technologically advanced countries (including, but not limited to the partners and observers of the BSEC), inter alia, through organizing exchange programmes between universities of the BSEC Region.
- *Promote* access to inclusive and quality education.

## **2. PRIORITIES OF THE WORKING GROUP**

Based on the BSEC Economic Agenda (Goal 14 “**Higher Standards in Education and Training**”) the Working Group intends to focus on the following priorities for the period of 2018-2019:

- Encourage implementation of digital projects and initiatives, aimed at promoting the exchange of information, experience and best practices in the field of education to promote access to inclusive and quality education and to answer global challenges, that will shape the future of education, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including initiatives on developing the Portal on Education in the BSEC Region.
- Promote modernization of the education systems and enhancing the conditions for the students to master skills required in the labor market at the dawn of the forth industrial revolution and in the context of the Data driven economy.
- Foster academic exchange and mobility of students, teachers, researchers and young scientists among the BSEC Member States, inter alia through bilateral and multilateral agreements and scholarships among higher education institutions.
- Promote further support of joint programmes of post graduate studies and University research.
- Encourage public-private partnerships in the field of education and support interconnection of education, science and business.

## **3. JOINT PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **I) Exchange of information, experience and best practices**

- Optimize the existing data-collection procedures in the field of education in the BSEC Region.

- Exchange of best practices and information in the field of education, including quality assurance in higher education and aggregation of information on recent developments and prospective trends in higher education.
- Encourage collecting information about the possibilities of joint scientific and educational projects, inter alia via the Questionnaire on Cooperation in Education amongst the BSEC Member States.
- Conduct a study and prepare a report on the cooperation of the BSEC Member States in the field of education and science, based on the bibliometric analysis, with a view to implement it, inter alia, within the BSEC Project Promotion Facility.
- Identify leading national universities of BSEC Member States in the framework of the Black Sea University Network (BSUN), and other platforms for multilateral cooperation in the field of education and research.

## **II) Cooperation and joint programmes**

- Harness cooperation opportunities offered by the “ERASMUS + Education and Training in the field of Higher Education” and encourage submission of joint proposals.
- Consider the possibility of developing joint international multilateral educational programs on future-oriented topics (serving the interests of the BSEC Member States), based on STEAM-educational approach.
- Promote further cooperation on Youth and Sports issues.
- Elaborate the Concept Note on Youth Policy in the BSEC Region.
- Consider specifics of establishing of a Coordination Bureau on Youth Cooperation in the Black Sea region in coordination with the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC.
- Enhance cooperation in the field of vocational training, based on the principle of dual education, among the BSEC Member States.
- Foster online education in the BSEC Member States and consider possibility of developing joint educational MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) courses and uploading them to the popular platforms (Coursera, EdX or *Openedu*) to facilitate promotion of the leading universities of the BSEC Member States and the BSEC brand.
- Consider the possibility of organizing the BSEC contests for students and young scientists within the provisions of the BSEC Economic Agenda and the Mechanism for the Development of Project Cooperation.

## **III) Digital projects and initiatives**

- Consider an upgrade and further development of the BSEC Portal of Education.
- Promote development of a unified information environment in the field of education in the BSEC Region.
- Support further development of leaflets / brochures for higher education in the Black Sea region and consider the possibility of creating interactive digital e-leaflets / e-brochures.

## **4. MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP**

- 1<sup>st</sup> WG Meeting (Spring, 2018, tbc) - adoption of the Plan of Action (2018-2019) and preparation for the Meeting of Ministers in charge of Education.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> WG Meeting (Autumn, 2018, tbc) - follow-up of the main priorities of the Working Group in conformity with the general objectives of cooperation.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> WG Meeting (Spring, 2019, tbc) - consideration of the initiatives within the Plan of Action and under the BSEC Economic Agenda; elaboration and implementation of the joint projects.
- 4<sup>th</sup> WG Meeting (Autumn, 2019, tbc) - consideration of the initiatives within the Plan of Action and under the BSEC Economic Agenda; elaboration and implementation of the joint projects and preparation of evaluation report of the Country-Coordinator.

## **5. MINISTERIAL MEETINGS**

Meeting of Ministers in charge of Education of the BSEC Member States (Spring, 2018, tbc), Consideration and adoption of the Declaration of the Ministers of Education.

## **6. RELEVANT EVENTS**

International Conference for students and young scientists from the Black Sea Region dedicated to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (Russia, 2019, tbc).

## **7. COOPERATION WITH OTHER BSEC BODIES**

- Increase collaboration with the BSEC Working Group on cooperation in science and technology.
- Foster cooperation with the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC).
- Enhance Cooperation with the BSUN.

## **8. COOPERATION WITH BSEC OBSERVERS AND PARTNERS**

- Develop and further extend cooperation among BSEC and international organizations and specialized agencies in the field of education.
- Further enhance cooperation through the UNESCO ASPnet network of schools.
- Elaborate and conclude the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between UNESCO and BSEC.
- Increase cooperation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Training Foundation (ETF).
- Elaborate the Concept Note containing proposals for enhancing the future cooperation of the BSEC with the following international organizations and associations in the field of Education: UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning (UNESCO IIEP); UNESCO Institute of Information Technology in Education (UNESCO IITE); Academic Cooperation Association (ACA); International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA); European Association of International Education (EAIE); Magna Charta Observatory.