



**ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

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**Annex III to BS/WG/S&T/R(2017)1**

**As of 7 April 2017**

**PLAN OF ACTION  
OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP  
ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**1 July 2016 – 30 June 2018**

**Country-Coordinator: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) Member States, based on their rich and long-lasting traditions in Science and Technology (S&T), are devoting particular attention for the further development and strengthening of S&T, both at national level and in the Organization as a whole.

In this context, the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology (WGCS&T) has shown a great advancement and potential.

Since the adoption of the 3rd BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2014-2018) (thereafter referred to as Action Plan) there have been a number of important developments in the policy landscape in the BSEC region that have significant implications for cooperation in various fields including Science and Technology.

Following the BSEC Economic Agenda, adopted by the BSEC Council (Belgrade, June 11, 2012) and Baku Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States, the following activities of the BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in Science and Technology are proposed during the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018:

- Focusing on human resources, capacity building, research infrastructure and innovation as main areas of action;
- Developing a registry of national research and innovation related structures of the BSEC Member States and creating a framework for their effective cross-national use;

- Encouraging joint research and training programmes and developing cross-cutting activities among the Scientific Institutions and Universities in the Member States in line with their priorities and in the priority areas identified by the Action Plan;
- Rising availability of public and private funds in R&D sector by facilitated awareness and cooperation;
- Develop digital integrity of BSEC countries in STI field to foster cross-border availability of R&D resources and rise its effective and efficient use;
- Create knowledge driven communication and cooperation common research area;
- Foster cross-border interregional international STI cooperation;
- Promoting the activities of the Working Group on Science and Technology oriented towards cooperation with international organizations aimed at strengthening the network of the researchers of the BSEC region.

The priority of the Working Group in the upcoming two years will be focusing on fostering synergy between national STI financial, information, infrastructure and workforce resources of BSEC Member States.

The BSEC Working Group on Cooperation in S&T, as a permanent subsidiary body of BSEC, shall monitor the implementation of the third Action Plan and submit regular progress reports to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and to the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States. The practical steps envisaged to that end are described in the third Action Plan.

## **2. LIST OF ACTIVITIES AND JOINT PROJECTS**

Within the framework of the Action Plan, during the two-year period the Working Group proposes the activities to be undertaken under the following policy domains:

- capacity building;
- human resources;
- innovation;
- research infrastructure.

### Capacity Building:

The main aims of capacity building measures within the BSEC are to establish benchmarking activities, exchange of good practices, sharing experiences, etc. that will enrich the development and implementation of national future-oriented S&T policies.

Considering that developing and strengthening national education policy and capacity-building in Science and Technology plays an essential role in the building of sustainable knowledge-based societies, the BSEC should also act as a platform for dialogue, cooperation and exchange of information and experience between decision-makers and the scientific community of the BSEC region.

Actions in capacity-building will be enhanced through the involvement of competent institutions in the BSEC Member States, such as the national academies of science, research councils, science and technology committees and science foundations responsible for the establishment of a knowledge-based society.

Special focus should be placed on the synergy between research and higher education, the interdisciplinary communication and research, highly-skilled researchers mobility issues, cooperation and coordination at regional and international level (through any bilateral or multilateral programme), particularly with the EU, preparing a database of such cooperation schemes (including reviews on the performance, potential, efficiency and impact of the national research systems) as well as analyzing the ongoing cooperation in S&T within BSEC member states, establishment of new research centers and institutes in BSEC member countries in line with international standards and support of existing ones.

To facilitate capacity building the Working Group plans to:

1. Provide BSEC STI development foresight. The output becomes a base for the 4<sup>th</sup> BSEC Action Plan (2018-2022).
2. Consider developing BSEC registry of STI financial resources consisting of information about calls for proposals opened for scientists and innovators in BSEC countries (the responsible institution for maintaining data base will be designated at a later stage).
3. Foster cross-border interregional international STI cooperation based on international S&T agreements between authorities of BSEC country's regions.

#### Human Resources:

There is a further need to consolidate, stimulate and exploit the scientific communities that constitute an essential element and potential for human resources for a sustainable growth and economic development in the BSEC Member States. It is proposed to continue, the tradition of organizing summer schools for the researchers in the region – short-term trainings especially for young researchers with participation of invited prominent scientists– with the aim of enhancing and distributing the know-how.

Other aims will be stimulation and enhancement of the performance of the local research personnel through intensive internationalization activities such as mobility schemes, participation in scientific events, promotion of international networking and participation in international projects within or beyond the BSEC countries using bilateral and multilateral cooperation schemes, recognition and consolidation of the role of researchers in a knowledge-based

sustainable development of each country and the BSEC region as a whole, increase the commitment of the researchers for the region.

To facilitate development of human resources the Working Group plans to:

1. Create virtual map for scientific mobility to rise effectiveness and efficiency of public spending on mobility grants.

2. Establish BSEC wide STI lecturing framework to foster knowledge exchange and growing young scientists within common BSEC research area.

### Innovation:

Carrying research results into innovative products and processes, as well as commercialization of scientific results are general challenges. Innovation remains a key priority due to its direct impact on employment, economic growth, prosperity and cooperation in all the BSEC Member States.

Special attention should be paid on the assessment of the performance of the national innovation systems and of the innovation-related structures, intensifying the exchange of information and best practices using networking of innovation units at a regional level and with similar international structures, organization of training activities for specialists and managerial personnel involved in innovation structures. The following factors influencing the innovation capacity must be taken into account: innovation framework conditions - industry – academia relations, innovation-related science and technology parks, business incubators, venture capitals, business angels, so on.

### Research Infrastructure:

Coordination and synergies in the development and operation of research infrastructures of major importance are becoming essential. National investments and/or grants from domestic and international donors are playing limited but important role in development of the research infrastructures.

Innovative (multi-site, virtual, etc.) and e-type (generic ICT platform for contemporary research, data storing, transferring, analyzing, processing, computing infrastructures including Grid and High-Performance Computing, Cloud Computing, etc.) research infrastructures at national and regional level must be further developed and oriented in the support of internationalization of these research systems.

Special focus should be placed on interoperability, interlinking, data sharing, open access, etc. which are becoming essential in managing and operating research infrastructures.

The Working Group is encouraged to enhance national and regional database of research infrastructures based on prioritizing the national needs (through the development of national research infrastructure roadmaps) and coordination at BSEC level (through the elaboration of a regional research infrastructure roadmap).

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

- 1<sup>st</sup>WG Meeting (Istanbul, 24-25 October 2016) – consideration of the draft and adoption of the Plan of Action (2016-2018);
- 2<sup>nd</sup>WG Meeting (Spring 2017, tbc) - consideration of the projects under the BSEC Economic Agenda in compliance with the Guidelines for the BSEC Project Management Unit;
- 3<sup>rd</sup>WG Meeting (Fall 2017, tbc): Consideration of draft documents (Agenda, third BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology and Declaration) and preparation for the Meeting of Ministers in charge of Science and Technology;
- 4<sup>th</sup>WG Meeting (Spring 2018, tbc) - Consideration of draft documents (Agenda, third BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology and Declaration) and preparation for the Meeting of Ministers in charge of Science and Technology, and of evaluation report of the Country-Coordinator.

### **4. MINISTERIAL MEETINGS**

Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States (Spring 2018, tbc) – Consideration and adoption of the 4<sup>th</sup> BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2018-2022) and Consideration and adoption of the Declaration of the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology.

### **5. RELEVANT EVENTS**

- Seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, exhibitions (tbc);
- Summer School for researchers in natural sciences from BSEC Member States (2017, tbc);
- Summer School for researchers in history from BSEC member states, (2017, tbc);
- Other events, such as science policy workshops/meetings within the framework of BSEC (tbc).

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

In coordination with the Working Group on Cooperation in Emergency Assistance to consider the possibility and feasibility of establishing S&T Network on Emergencies. In case of urgent risks and circumstances on emergencies the S&T Network will facilitate connection between scientists and experts in man made disasters, seismology, floods, fires etc. in order to provide scientific feedback and recommendations.

Cooperation with the International Center for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) in organizing seminars and workshops.

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

The BSEC Member States, the Permanent International Secretariat of the BSEC (BSEC PERMIS) and the BSEC Related Bodies constitute the most organized nucleus among the large number of countries involved in the international projects. In this respect, the BSEC should promote the development of synergies between the organization's own activities and the ones foreseen in the following international projects, including the formulation of proposals for mutually beneficial joint actions:

- **Horizon 2020** - The European Commission's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014 – 2020);
- **IncoNetEaP** - EU funded "STI International Cooperation Network for Eastern Partnership Countries";
- **EaP Plus** - EU funded "STI International Cooperation Network for Eastern Partnership Countries = PLUS";
- **Black Sea Horizon**
- Cooperation with the UNESCO and UNECE;
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Intent on Cooperation in S&T BSEC – USA.