

## **RECOMMENDATION 106/2008\***

### **The Impact of Globalization on the Social Policies of the BSEC Member States**

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation recognizes that globalization, as a process of interconnecting people across the world through freer cross-border exchanges of ideas, knowledge, goods and services opens up the potential for higher growth, advanced human development and prosperity for the BSEC Member States. At the same time, the Assembly is fully aware of the challenges created by international competitiveness and its effects on people, families and communities. In this respect, the Assembly recalls its recommendations 60/2002: “Globalization: challenges and prospects for the PABSEC Member States” and 93/2006: “The process of globalization and the potential threat to the cultural diversity”.

2. The Assembly also recognizes that most of the BSEC Member States faced the dual challenge of globalisation and transition from centrally planned to market economy. The declining output, increased inequality and widespread poverty associated with transition were exacerbated by entry into the global economy. Certain groups of population were particularly affected and became aware of the costs of change, particularly when there were no new social safety nets to replace the ones which had been discarded.

3. In this regard, the Assembly recalls its relevant recommendations on: Social guarantees during the transition period (14/1996); Rights and social protection of refugees and displaced persons (21/1997); The legal framework of the protection of migrant workers in the Black Sea countries and the relations between immigrant communities and the host country (51/2001); Women's participation in the political, economic, social and cultural life (61/2002); Social

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\* The Assembly debate on 5 November 2008 (see Doc. GA32/CC31/REP/08 – Report on “The impact of globalization on the social policies of the BSEC Member States”, discussed by the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee at its Thirty-First Meeting in Alexandroupolis on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008; Rapporteur: Ms. Eva Kaili – Greece).

reintegration of jobless people (67/2002); The fight against poverty (74/2003); Improving social, economic and civil rights of people with disabilities (77/2004); Improvement of the quality of life in the BSEC Member States (100/2007); “Social cohesion within the BSEC Member States: contribution to political stability” (103/2008).

4. The Assembly is conscious of the fact that the contemporary economic and technological environment urges rapid adaptation to shifting economic currents and renewed strategies of social policy, to meet the challenges of adjustment of labour markets and education systems to new sources of competition. Therefore, the potential gains that the BSEC region may reap from globalisation will depend on success in undertaking adequate competitive, regulatory and social reforms. Education and training, immigration policy, labour market reforms and the reshaping of social protection are considered as priority policy domains.

5. The Assembly welcomes the effort of the BSEC Member States to parallel the economic development with social sustainability, by increasingly giving priority to social policies, particularly with regard to improving social security and fighting poverty and unemployment. Furthermore, the Assembly stresses the fact that the recent economic growth of the BSEC region allows for and requires more than ever before the strengthening of the significant human capital of the region. By investing in this immense resource, the BSEC Member States will be able to raise their competitiveness in the global economy, while ensuring the wellbeing of their people.

6. The Assembly acknowledges the role of regional integration and cooperation as a stepping stone to global integration. Further cooperation within BSEC in building and promoting social goals will constitute a means of broadening the common values, interests and objectives along with shaping common responses to global challenges. In this respect, labour force enforcement and human capital development in line with the UN Millennium Development Goals, the ILO Decent Work Agenda and the Lisbon Strategy of the EU are high priority domains for the BSEC Member States.

**7. Therefore, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends** that the Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States:

i. *maintain* a sustainable and growth-promoting macroeconomic framework, while applying a social dimension to economic policies for the benefit of the people;

ii. *improve* the employment prospects of vulnerable groups - low skilled, older workers, early school leavers, migrants, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, unemployed;

iii. *give priority* to robust policies for education and vocational training, which are fully integrated into the broader economic and social development policy;

iv. *promote* training programmes both for the unemployed and for workers at risk of being left behind by technological, social and economic developments;

v. *encourage* the presence of tripartite bodies in policy design and implementation and to involve the social partners in the identification of training needs and the development of training programmes;

vi. *invest* in education of the younger generation and promote greater equality of opportunities by providing child benefits in order to keep children at school;

vii. *place emphasis* on further skills development in the field of information and communication technologies;

viii. *take appropriate measures* in order to prevent, detect and eradicate all forms of crime against children, including through the Internet;

ix. *establish* regulations that provide social protection of migrants, especially women and children;

x. *elaborate* mechanisms of reintegration of returning migrants into the domestic labour market;

xi. *improve* the reach of job-mediation services with the aim of diminishing the incentive for the unemployed to seek job opportunities abroad and thereby eliminating the phenomenon of brain drain;

xii. *value* the potential of labour migration as a factor of strengthening the labour force and boosting productivity;

xiii. *enhance* cooperation on migration within BSEC, possibly by establishing a BSEC working group on migration issues, with a view to developing effective migration management and addressing issues related to a freer movement of labour force in the BSEC Member States;

xiv. *continue* and enhance cooperation for the development of SMEs in the BSEC region and promote women entrepreneurship, in particular;

xv. *encourage* formalisation of labour markets and small businesses by appropriate tax reforms and provide incentives for the declaration of work by promoting the rights for decent employment for everyone;

xvi. *enforce* legislation on social protection and to monitor its implementation so as to respond to shifting needs and ensure quality and accessibility of social services;

xvii. *improve* conditions of work and ensure greater occupational safety and health, primarily in sectors with a high level of occupational risk;

xviii. *further strengthen* the legal basis for social partnership, as well as create organizational and institutional conditions for functioning of an effective and inclusive social dialogue;

xix. *encourage* the activity of NGOs and the development of NGO networks;

xx. *further develop* cooperation within BSEC on social development issues in order to make best use of the opportunities for collaboration with the EU created within the framework of the Black Synergy.

**8. The Parliamentary Assembly** invites the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider its Recommendation.