



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Doc.: GA48/CC47/REC154/16

RECOMMENDATION 154/2016¹

Education and Science for Sustainable Development in the BSEC Member States

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) recognizes that cooperation in the spheres of science and education contributes significantly to further bilateral and multilateral collaboration and plays a key role in ensuring sustainable development, stability, and prosperity in all BSEC Member States.
2. In recognition of the vital contribution of science and education to the sustainable development of the Region, the PABSEC has always placed great emphasis on all issues related to these disciplines. The wide range of relevant Recommendations, adopted by the Assembly includes:
 - *Ratification and Implementation of the Black Sea Convention on Cooperation in the Fields of Culture, Education, Science and Information* (Recommendation 3/1994);
 - *Cooperation among the PABSEC Member Countries for the Improvement of Education* (Recommendation 10/1995);
 - *Cooperation of the Academic Communities of the BSEC Member Countries and its Legal Framework* (Recommendation 27/1998);
 - *Mutual Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas by the PABSEC Member Countries* (Recommendation 31/1998);

¹ Assembly debate on 1 December 2016 (see Doc.: GA48/CC47/REP/16, Report of the Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee: *Education and Science for Sustainable Development in the BSEC Member States* on 25 October 2016; Rapporteur: Mrs. Olympia TELIGIORIDOU, Member of the Committee (Greece).
Text adopted by the Assembly in Belgrade 1 December 2016.

- *Black Sea Universities Network: Contribution to the BSEC Academic Cooperation* (Recommendation 56/2001);
 - *Cultural, Educational and Social Aspects of EU Enlargement: Consequences for the Black Sea Region* (Recommendation 86/2005);
 - *The Bologna Process and the Reforms of Higher Educational Systems in the BSEC Countries* (97/2007); and
 - *Lifelong Learning in the BSEC Member States* (Recommendation 125/2011).
3. The “BSEC Economic Agenda Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”, representing the strategy for long-term cooperation in the Region, stresses that in the new century, putting knowledge to the forefront of its activities, by taking advantage of the latest achievements in science and technology, constitutes one of the main goals of the BSEC. Development of cooperation between the scientific communities should be directed to the use of the achievements of world science and technology development in the priority areas of the economic cooperation among the BSEC countries.
 4. The PABSEC underlines that the States need to consolidate, stimulate, and strengthen their scientific communities, which are one of the most important elements for economic growth and sustainable development. The role of researchers is important in addressing societal challenges when building the infrastructure for the knowledge-based sustainable development of each country and the Region in general. Therefore, reforms in education, science and training should be given priority. Integration of the sustainable educational approaches in the educational systems of the BSEC Member States will provide a comprehensive response to the current problems by increasing the human capital in the Region, contributing to individual and community development and social cohesion.
 5. The PABSEC believes that science and education should make a concrete and quantifiable contribution to the overall education and science for sustainable development. Sustainable development principles and examples of their practical application in everyday life must be included at all levels of education, thus ensuring better perception of the concept of sustainable practices. To promote better awareness, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should serve as a basis for professional development of teachers to ensure its dissemination as widely as possible on an individual basis, at the same time resulting in a multiplier effect similar to the process of “training the trainers”.
 6. The Assembly expresses concern over the demographic challenges, facing BSEC Member States and the threat they pose for the quantity and quality of the workforce and the current financial crisis which has had a strong impact on the Black Sea Region. The Assembly firmly believes that the focus should be in the education, capacity building, research infrastructure and innovation as areas of action. Since the impact of science in sustainable development is a strategic objective in the national strategies of the societies, special attention should be paid to the funding of science and education in the BSEC

countries, both by the State and the private sector. In the XXI century development of the science and innovation is increasingly viewed as a means of solving socially significant problems in order to overcome serious challenges in the economic area development and the global one.

7. The PABSEC appreciates the efforts made by the BSEC within the framework of the *Third BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2014–2018)*, adopted by the Ministers in charge of Science and Technology of the BSEC Member States (Baku, 3 December 2014). The Assembly notes with satisfaction that since the adoption of the *Second BSEC Action Plan on Cooperation in Science and Technology (2010–2014)*, there have been a number of important developments in the policy landscape of the BSEC region. This progress has significant implications for cooperation in various disciplines, including science and technology. An important development is reflected in the adoption of the *BSEC Economic Agenda: Towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership* (in June 2012), which explicitly refers to the objective of ‘Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology’ (Goal 11).

8. **Therefore, the PABSEC recommends** that the parliaments and the governments of the BSEC Member States:
 - i. *involve* all stakeholders, in particular, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Academy of Sciences, universities and academic communities to participate actively in the dissemination and use of knowledge, stimulating innovation, joint production processes to ensure the decision-making and capacity-building for sustainable development;
 - ii. *continue* joint work between the BSEC Member States and the other international organizations in the preparation of the legislation governing the various aspects of the topics of science and education for sustainable development;
 - iii. *facilitate* closer cooperation in the fields of science and technology among the BSEC Member States, the BSEC Related Bodies and with other partners and international organizations in order to encourage co-funding schemes for formulating and implementing regional scientific, research and educational projects for sustainable development;
 - iv. *reinforce* the integration of ESD into education, training, and sustainable development policies, focusing on system-wide and holistic approaches and on multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnerships between actors in the education sector, private sector, civil society, and all, involved in the different sustainable development areas;
 - v. *ensure* the education, training, and professional qualification of teachers and educators to enable them to successfully integrate ESD into teaching and learning practices;
 - vi. *promote* the scientific research for Sustainable Development in the BSEC Region;
 - vii. *use* of existing tools such as the BSEC Portal on Education for distributing data that can be used to assess developments and to share best practices;

- viii. *improve* cooperation to implement the sustainable development goals, adopted by the decision of the UN General Assembly (September 2015): “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”;
- ix. *encourage* joint research among scientific institutions and training curricula among universities in the BSEC Member States in accordance with their priorities;
- x. *support* the exchange of information and experiences with regard to the modernization of the educational systems in the BSEC Member States aimed at increasing sustainable growth and the development of knowledge based societies;
- xi. *strengthen* cooperation on initiatives such as academic mobility for teachers and students, common educational materials, and transfer of international educational technology, so as to enable Member States to share experiences, particularly in the vocational training;
- xii. *contribute* to the strengthening of the role of knowledge-based researchers, in solving social problems, for the sustainable development of each country and the Region, as a whole;
- xiii. *stimulate and increase* effectiveness of the local scientific staff through intensive international activities, participation in scientific events and international projects. In this context, the use of multiple bilateral cooperation programmes in the BSEC Member States is a tool of paramount importance;
- xiv. *promote* sustainable cooperation, using the achievements of science and education in the sphere of ecology, to study the effects of climate change in the Region, in accordance with Goal 13 of the UN *Sustainable Development Goals*;
- xv. *promote* international cooperation in forecasting, climate change, and support basic and applicable scientific research in this area;
- xvi. *revise* the agreements signed within the framework of the BSEC, related to the sustainable development, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of their implementation in the light of the prevalent conditions in the global political and economic arena;
- xvii. *formulate* a comprehensive environmental, educational system at the national level, which includes creating public awareness about relevant and growing environmental issues and identifying the application of new environmental technologies;
- xviii. *legally encourage* producers to create productive chains and products that reduce the negative impact on the environment and climate;
- xix. *enhance* cooperation between the BSEC Member States in promoting a university-based partnership for sustainability, with exchange programmes between National Academies of Sciences and the advancement of scientific researches;
- xx. *develop* a registry of national innovation structures of the BSEC Member States and create the conditions for their effective interaction;

- xxi. *enhance* the BSEC Member States cooperation with technologically advanced countries, inter alia through organizing exchange programmes among National Academies of Sciences and universities;
- xxii. *promote and support* the development of joint academic programmes among the Academies of Sciences and universities of the BSEC Region;
- xxiii. *encourage* relevant national institutions to initiate specific programs with the Black Sea University Network on education, research, high technologies, management, environment, natural sciences, etc. in order to strengthen unification and cooperation in the Region, focusing on the attainment of the main goals and objectives of the BSEC.

9. **The PABSEC invites** the BSEC Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.