**ACTION PLAN**

**OF THE BSEC WORKING GROUP**

**ON CULTURE**

**(1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016)**

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**CULTURE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*Aware of the fact that the present Action Plan represents a continuation of the Action Plan that was implemented during the former Moldavian Coordination of the BSEC Working Group on Culture (2013-2014);*

*Taking into consideration the necessity for stronger cooperation in the field of culture between the BSEC Member States;*

*Recalling the commitments undertaken by the Ministers of Culture of the BSEC Member States by adopting the Sounion Declaration in the Hellenic Republic, on 4 July 2007;*

*Emphasizing the importance of the priorities in the field of culture contained in the "BSEC Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership" adopted by the BSEC Council (Belgrade, 11 June 2012), and in particular, those singled out in the Action Plan on the Implementation of the "Economic Agenda" adopted by the Council (Istanbul, 15 December 2012);*

*Acknowledging the fact that sharing common cultural values and cultural heritage elements represents an instrument for prosperity and harmony in the region;*

*Taking into account the richness of the cultural heritage and of the traditions of the BSEC Member States;*

*Keeping in mind the important role that the international organizations play in the wider Black Sea Region in the field of culture and especially in what concerns the development of policies regarding regional and international cultural cooperation, especially by preserving tangible and intangible heritage as a means of dialogue and sustainable development.*

## 1. OBJECTIVES:

The general objective of the present Plan of Action 2015-2016 is to further strengthen cultural cooperation and thus increase the impact of culture and cultural policies in the Black Sea Region.

**The specific objectives:**

The Moldavian coordination of the BSEC Working Group on Culture sets the following goals for the activity that it will coordinate in 2015-2016, the goals being a continuity for those expressed two years ago, including the youth and sports issues:

1. Cooperation within the frame of cultural heritage;
2. Culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development and as a mean of promoting mobility of artists and youth
3. Sharing the best BSEC practices in implementing cultural policies.

## 2. MEASURES

### a. Cooperation within the frame of cultural heritage

The safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity shall be stimulated and mainstreamed within all international mechanisms of cooperation focusing on Black Sea Region, whereupon priority shall be given to the development of regional and cross-border projects of cultural cooperation. To this end, efforts shall be stepped up for the presentation of multinational candidature files for inscription in the UNESCO's World Heritage List and Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, including the priority given to multinational cultural elements in the allocation of international support.

Cooperation should also include promoting the restoration of major architectural monuments which are symbols of national and regional culture and care projects of the architectural heritage on the territory of the BSEC Member States, and developing cooperation in combating illicit trafficking of cultural property belonging to the archaeological, historical, ethnographical heritage and the arts, *inter alia* through exchange of information to facilitate the return of lost or illegally exported cultural values within the existing legislation.

Regional and cross-border cooperation shall be encouraged for the purpose of defining transnational "cultural routes" and related tourism offers, possibly including the development of infrastructures, the publication of common editorial and communication projects for the promotion of the shared cultural heritage, including promotion of materials such as books or documentaries regarding the hospitality traditions in the BSEC Member States, the creation of transnational museum networks, as well as all other initiatives of cross-border cooperation.

Activities organized in cooperation with the civil society shall include events and initiatives aimed to popularize culture (for example, the organization of cultural heritage days and the establishment of cultural awards, school competitions and art camps). In the spirit of this Plan of Action, the development of similar activities over a cross-border and international dimension is encouraged.

Two very important project proposals within this framework have been already discussed, and their implementation could be a first success in 2017, on the occasion of the 25$^{th}$ anniversary of the BSEC. The first project refers to a collection of the XX century works of the classic literature writers from the BSEC member states, a collection that will familiarize the local readers with the Black Sea region masterpieces. The second one regards the hospitality traditions in the BSEC Member States, which could be developed through a joint ethnographical research and catalogue, a regional festival, a book of historians about a cultural history of hospitality of the Black Sea Region etc. Moreover, the former ideas of developing regional cultural and touristic routes should remain on the agenda of the BSEC working group on culture.

### b. Culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development and as a mean of promoting mobility of artists and youth

The cultural and creative sectors contribute substantially to regional, social and economic development in the Black Sea Region. It is important to continue to explore and promote the role of culture in supporting and fostering creativity and innovation in the region.

An essential aspect of the cooperation is to increase contacts and develop creative partnerships between the cultural sector and other sectors such as business and industry, research and education.

For instance the film industry and cultural tourism represent great potential in the cultural sector. In the constantly growing tourism industry, culture is an increasingly important attraction factor for tourists seeking authenticity and experiences.

It is important to foster the contribution of culture to sustainable tourism, as a key factor for local and regional attractiveness and economic development, as well as a driver for highlighting the importance of cultural heritage in Europe.

Evaluating the ratio of cultural industries in the national GDP's of the BSEC member states as a common study of the national experts would pave the way towards improving the economic potential of culture and arts. At the same time, the other BSEC member states experience in promoting public policies related to culture development will emphasize the best practices in the sector, and will ease the process of culture monitoring and including it in the national strategies of development

The BSEC Member States will stimulate projects and programs developed at the local level jointly, by social development and cultural non-governmental organizations, in collaboration with local authorities; especially those projects and programs that integrate cultural services in social and economic development programs. There are several examples of this type of collaboration. Disseminating information on successful models would help promote this approach.

People-to-people contacts are an important part of the Black Sea cooperation. Education, culture and youth, are some of its key components.

The BSEC Member States will create more opportunities for people to come together in joint activities that will foster mutual understanding and trust, which again will foster stability and development in the Black Sea Region. Cultural contacts promote understanding and communication.

Cultural activities create new initiatives and networks, build trust and often lead to cooperation in other areas. As a common start project could serve Moldova's initiative entitled: "Youth engagement in community building through the understanding, development and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Black Sea Region". This project has the goal to strengthen the role in raising awareness of the value (social, economic, educational, cultural) of the cultural heritage in society building and community development.

Mobility of artists and youth culture professionals in the Black Sea Region is crucial to enhance cultural and linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue. This deserves to be actively promoted by the Member States. Promoting cultural entrepreneurship among young people and encouraging children and young people to take part in different activities will help to strengthen civil society and democracy in the Black Sea Region.

The BSEC Member states are invited to work in close cooperation to encourage networking between mobility information services at European level, thus improving information provision to artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the Black Sea Region, building partnerships on existing information and advice.

Given the fact that at the last meeting from Chisinau, the BSEC PERMIS addressed to the BSEC members in order to include future institutional cooperation on youth and sports issues within BSEC, it is necessary to develop programs of mobility for students, young sportsmen etc, and to invite the regional Ministries of Youth and Sports to join several BSEC meetings, hence to develop common action plans about exchanges of young artists, sportsmen, social activists etc.

**c. Sharing the best BSEC practices in implementing cultural policies**

Cultural policies represent the starting point in revitalizing the creative sector and in determining the major changes that take place in culture and arts. The BSEC Member states are encouraged to promote the access to culture for their peoples, along with the principles stated in the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression (Paris, 2005).

A network of ministerial communication would strengthen the policies in protecting the cultural heritage, in fostering the mobility of youth and artists, in studying the best practices and in having joint projects as those mentioned above.

Joint actions within the cultural sector will result in the development of human resources, in the transfer of know-how, in the emergence of common projects and promotion the exchange of experience. Raising the public awareness towards protecting and promoting cultural heritage and human values could also be fastened by such a platform of communication.

Promoting the synergies between policies and programs in the field of art, cultural heritage and education will foster the access to culture. Moreover, sharing the best BSEC practices in implementing cultural policies will better the fight against illegal trafficking of cultural objects and will ease the cooperation with civil society in accordance with national legislations.

## 3. LIST OF ACTIVITES:

**"International Festival of Theatre and Film Schools – Class Fest", Chisinau**
**"Regional Conference "Cultural Heritage and Information Technologies", October, 2015**

## 4. PRIORITIES FOR PDF FUNDING:

The priorities to be funded from the PDF will continue to be those mentioned in the previous Action Plan of the BSEC Working Group on culture:

- Cultural routes;
- Intangible heritage;
- Cultural and creative industries.

## 5. MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP:

- Meeting (Istanbul, March 2015) – Adoption of the Plan of Action.

- Meeting (Istanbul, November 2015) – Consideration of the main issues of the agenda.
- Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Culture and on the Cooperation in Tourism, (Istanbul, April 2016).
- Meeting (Chisinau, November 2016) – Consideration of the evaluation report of the Country-Coordinator.

## 6. RELEVANT EVENTS:

- Meeting of Ministries in charge of Culture, Istanbul, June 2016

## 7. COOPERATION WITH OTHER BSEC BODIES:

a) Other Working Groups:
Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies and Working Group on Cooperation in Tourism:

- Regional Conference "Cultural Heritage and Information Technologies", October, 2015
- Joint Meeting of the Working Groups on Culture and on the Cooperation in Tourism (to continue discussion on joint projects on cultural routes), Istanbul, 2016.

## 8. COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

To enhance the cooperation with European Union, UN Alliance of Civilizations, UNDP, UNESCO, Council of Europe, the Council of Ministers for Culture of the South-East Europe and others.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION

### Coordination Mechanisms

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a close coordination shall be sought so as to ensure the coherence of all follow-up actions to the principles embodied by the present Plan of Action. Such coordination shall be pursued by means of ensuring a permanent secretariat, also responsible for the international coordination of related operational activities. Moreover, it should be taken into consideration the previously expressed Romanian proposal of creating an online platform of communication between the national BSEC representatives.

*Annex I*

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