

STATUTE OF THE BLACK SEA UNIVERSITIES NETWORK

Sharing the goals of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (hereinafter BSEC) and of the Parliamentary Assembly of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (hereinafter PABSEC) which aim to transform the Black Sea region, through mutual cooperation, into a region of peace, freedom, stability and prosperity,

Mindful of the leading role that universities play in the economic, political and cultural life of their nations and wishing to enhance their scientific and educational role within the institutional structure of the BSEC,

Convinced that strengthening the cooperation among the Black Sea Universities may bring a major contribution to the achievement of the goals of the BSEC,

Reaffirming our commitment to the provisions of the Memorandum of the First Conference of the University Rectors and acting in pursuance of the Memorandum,

Taking into consideration the relevant provisions of the national legislation of the BSEC Member States concerning universities,

We have decided to found the Black Sea University Network, hereinafter referred to as the BSUN.

Purpose and Objectives of the BSUN

ART. 1 The BSUN was founded for the purpose of developing educational, scientific, and cultural cooperation and exchanges among the Universities of the BSEC Member States and other institutions with similar concern.

ART. 2 To fulfill the above mentioned purpose, the BSUN shall:

- **promote** a systematic exchange of information and experience among the Member Universities;
- **promote** harmonization, comparable conditions and compatibility of systems of university management;
- **encourage** common projects in the common fields of interest of Member Universities (increasing Internet access capability, introduction of modern computer-supported educational technologies, with special emphasis on the multimedia approach, updating the processing capabilities of BSUN for creation of an effective Research Excellence Network, retraining the BSUN staff according to the newest IT educational approaches); educational and cultural facilities;

- **organize** undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate courses, conferences, meetings, exhibitions, seminars and workshops, as well as other events;
- **support and encourage** scientific and educational cooperation among universities, research institutions, NGOs, investor and economic institutions of the Member Universities;
- **pay** particular attention to facilitating multilateral cooperation projects elaborated within the framework of the BSUN and BSEC;
- **encourage** cooperation and play the role of a bridge between the Ministries of Education, Science and Technology, Academies of Sciences and other institutions and establishments of the Member Universities and Countries;
- **encourage** twin-University relationship between the Member Universities;
- **develop** human contacts and cultural cooperation by organizing meetings, youth and art festivals, sports competitions and other events;
- **work** together for a sustainable development of the Black Sea Region and to protect the environment, as well as historical and cultural monuments;
- **work** in close collaboration with BSEC and other bodies of the Black Sea cooperation process - PABSEC, BSEC Business Council, Black Sea Trade and Development Bank, International Black Sea Club – and maintain contacts with other international and regional associations of local authorities.

Membership of the BSUN

ART. 3 The BSUN is intended to function under the framework of the Academic Cooperation in the Black Sea Region (art. 23 BSEC Charter). In this respect, all institutions sharing this aim are invited to join the BSUN.

The membership in BSUN is structured in the following groups:

- a. members
- b. associated members
- c. affiliated members

The membership for the position a), b), and c) is renewed on yearly base.

The interested Universities and other organizations should apply to the BSUN National Secretariat in their country or to the International Permanent Secretariat filling an application form and providing relevant information and documents.

The Executive Board appoints a Committee to analyze the applications and formulate a proposal to be approved in one of Executive Board ordinary meetings.

After the approval of the Executive Board the applicants should pay the membership fee to the International Permanent Secretariat and receive a Membership Certificate valid for one year.

ART. 4 BSUN members are accredited universities from one of the BSEC member countries according to the regulations of that country and recognized by the Ministry of Education or other official institutions with regulatory attributions in the field of Higher Education.

A BSUN member:

- has one vote in the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors;
- is informed about all projects and other relevant data available within the BSUN;
- could initiate, promote or coordinate joint cooperative projects;
- has access to services of BSUN structures;
- is promoted by all publications of BSUN and the web site;
- should propose nominations and be represented in BSUN eligible positions;
- should play an active role in the cooperative projects within the BSUN;
- should be represented at the BSUN meetings and events;
- should pay the membership fee established by the BSUN General Assembly;

ART. 5 BSUN associated members are accredited universities from other countries that are not BSEC members, according to the regulations of that country.

A BSUN associated member:

- ✓ is informed about all projects and other relevant data available within the BSUN;
- ✓ has access to services of BSUN structures;
- ✓ is promoted by all publications of BSUN and the web site;
- ✓ should play an active role in the cooperative projects within the BSUN;
- ✓ should be represented at the BSUN meetings and events;
- ✓ should pay a membership fee established by the BSUN Executive Board;

ART. 6 BSUN affiliated members are universities and other higher education institutions established and functioning according to the regulations of that country but are not yet accredited.

A BSUN affiliated member:

- is informed about all projects and other relevant data available within the BSUN;
- has access to services of BSUN structures;
- is promoted by all publications of BSUN and the web site;
- should play an active role in the cooperative projects within the BSUN;
- should be represented at the BSUN meetings and events;
- should pay a membership fee established by the BSUN Executive Board;

Governing and Representation Bodies of the BSUN

ART. 7 The governing bodies of the BSUN are as followings:

- The General Assembly / Conference of Rectors
- The President of the BSUN
- The Presidential Troika
- The Executive Board

ART. 8 The General Assembly / Conference of Rectors is composed by the Rectors of the Member Universities or their representatives.

The General Assembly / Conference of Rectors is the highest decision-making body of the BSUN with the following attributions:

- has ordinary sessions every two years;
- adopts and amend the BSUN Statute
- approves the BSUN Framework Program for the next two years
- approves the report of the past President
- appoints the members of the financial auditing committee
- approves the reports of the financial auditing committee
- appoints the members of different BSUN commissions and bodies
- approves the nomination of the directors of the International Permanent Secretariat and of National Secretariats
- approves the nomination of the directors of the BSUN Centers and the Coordinators of the BSUN Consortia
- approves the nominations for the members of the Executive Board
- elects the acting and future Presidents of the BSUN

The sessions General Assembly / Conference of Rectors are convened by the acting President upon the request of one third of the BSUN members

Each Member University shall have one vote in the General Assembly.

The quorum of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors of BSUN sessions shall be at least one half of the Member Universities that have paid the annual membership fee and obtained the Certificate of Membership.

Decisions are taken by simple majority except in the cases of amendments to the Statute, which shall require three-fourth' majority of those present people and voting.

The working languages of the General Assembly and of the Executive Board shall be the working languages adopted by the BSEC.

ART. 9 The President of the BSUN is a prestigious personality, rector of a BSUN member university, demonstrating outstanding contributions to the development of BSUN and leadership skills.

The BSUN acting President coordinates the implementation of the BSUN Framework Program adopted by the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

The President's term of office shall continue until the next ordinary session of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

The acting President shall convene, open, chair and close the sessions of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

The acting President shall convene, open, chair and close the meetings of the Executive Board between the sessions of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

ART. 10 The Presidential Troika consists of the past, acting and future Presidents of the BSUN and represents the BSUN at the international high-level meetings and events presenting the position of the BSUN.

For signing international agreements or declarations, the representative of the BSUN Presidential Troika should have the mandate from the Executive Board.

The major international documents signed by a representative of the Presidential Troika become into force after ratification by the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

ART. 11 The Executive Board is the decision-making body between two sessions of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

The members of the Executive Board are elected as following:

- 1 representative from each BSEC country = 11
- Past, Acting and Future President = 3

The Executive Board has at least one ordinary meeting per year.

The Meetings are convened by the acting President upon the request of one third of the Executive Board members.

ART. 12 In order to recognize the outstanding contributions of different personalities to the academic cooperation in the Black Sea Region, the BSUN Academy will be set up.

The members of this BSUN Academy will be elected by the General Assembly, based on their contributions to the development of the BSUN, scientific and academic cooperation in the region.

The BSUN Academy will serve as a think-tank for the future programs of the BSUN.

Administrative Bodies of the BSUN

ART. 13 The administrative bodies of the BSUN are as followings:

- International Permanent Secretariat
- National Secretariats

ART 14 The International Permanent Secretariat of the BSUN is established at “Ovidius” University of Constantza / Romania and is the official depository of the BSUN documents.

The BSUN International Permanent Secretariat is a public institution established and supported by the Romanian Government through the Ministry of Education and Research.

The BSUN International Permanent Secretariat:

- is the official International contact point of the BSUN;
- issues and deposits the official documents of the BSUN;
- is in permanent contact with the members, National secretariats, centers and other structures of the BSUN;
- follows the activities of the BSUN implementing the decisions of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors, Executive Board, and President;
- keeps the contacts with BSEC and BSEC related bodies and other regional and international organizations;
- maintains and updates the BSUN database;
- edits the BSUN International Journal “Letters from the Black Sea”;
- follows the payments of the membership fees and of other incomes and assure the distribution of funds according to the budget approved by the Executive Board;
- assures the promotion of the BSUN and of its members in the Black Sea region and worldwide, using available promotion channels.

The IPS is led by a director that is nominated by the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors and appointed by the Romanian Minister of Education and Research.

ART 15 The National Secretariats of the BSUN are established by the National Governments or by the member Universities from one country.

In the case of Romania, The International Permanent Secretariat acts also as a National Secretariat.

A BSUN National Secretariat:

- is the official BSUN contact point in that country;
- provides information on the BSUN activities and programs and facilitates the involvement of the Universities of that country in the BSUN programs;
- assures the communication between the member universities from that country and keeps the contact with the BSUN IPS and other structures;
- issues periodically information newsletters on the BSUN activities and distributes them to the National organizations and institutions;
- maintains and updates the BSUN National database;
- follows the activities that have been assumed to be developed by the member universities from that country;
- follows the incomes and expenses included in the National BSUN budget;
- promotes the BSUN and its members at national and Regional level.

The National secretariats are nominated by the member universities of that country and approved by the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

The established BSUN National Secretariats have been included in Appendix 1

BSUN Academic and Scientific Cooperative Structures

ART. 16 The activities of academic cooperation and scientific research of the BSUN are developed in established or ad-hoc structures.

The established BSUN Academic and Scientific Cooperative Structures are as following:

- BSUN Consortia of Universities
- BSUN Centers.

The ad-hoc structures are structures developed on project base.

ART. 17 A BSUN Consortium of Universities is a structured group of Universities dedicated to cooperation in a specific academic field, or research topic, or to promote some specific values.

A Consortium is established base on a common declaration of the rectors of member universities defining the area of cooperation, the authorities and the responsibilities.

The establishment of a BSUN Consortium is approved by the Executive Board based on a proposal promoted by a group of member Universities.

The organization of a Consortium consists in a Coordinator, a Steering Committee and a Coordination Unit.

The activities are developed based on some programs deriving from the BSUN Framework Programs. For a specific program of a Consortium, the Executive Board could approve the allocation of a financial support from the BSUN Budget.

The list of established BSUN Consortia of Universities is included in the Appendix 3.

ART. 18 A BSUN Center is an academic or a research center aiming to develop a resource of expertise in a very specific field.

The establishment of a BSUN Center is approved by the Executive Board based on a proposal promoted by a group of member Universities.

The structure of a center consists of a director, a steering committee, a council of donors and the team of the center. It is recommended to have international teams involving famous scientists and developing regional graduate programs.

The activities of the centers are structured on projects deriving from the BSUN Framework Program. For a specific project of a Center, the Executive Board could approve the allocation of a financial support from the BSUN Budget.

The list of established BSUN Centers of Universities is included in the Appendix 4.

Honors, distinctions and prizes

ART. 19 Every two year or with special occasions, the BSUN will award a group of Universities and other organizations for OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ACADEMIC COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION.

The award will consist of a diploma.

The Executive Board based on the proposals of a Nomination Committee will approve the nominations.

ART. 20 Every two year or with special occasions, the BSUN will award a group of Personalities for OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ACADEMIC COOPERATION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION.

The award will consist of a diploma.

The Executive Board based on the proposals of a Nomination Committee will approve the nominations.

Finances of the BSUN

ART. 21 The General Assembly / Conference of Rectors approves the scale and criteria according to which the Members are to contribute for covering the expenses of the BSUN establishing the membership fees.

ART. 22 The sources of financing the BSUN activities as well as individual projects may come from individual country universities, National Governments, corporate bodies as well as from donations, sponsorships and legacies.

ART. 23 The Bank account and accounting registers are kept by the International Permanent Secretariat that follows the registration of the incomes and expenses based on a Budget established by the Executive Board.

ART. 24 50 % of the income from the fees paid by the member Universities of each country, will be directed to the National Secretariats to be used for financing BSUN activities. Each year, the budget and the Progress Report of the National Secretariats will be subject to approve by the Executive Board.

ART. 25 The Executive Board is financially accountable to the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors. An audited financial report has to be prepared by a committee appointed by the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors and presented in the ordinary sessions of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors.

Termination of the BSUN

ART. 26 In case of the General Assembly / Conference of Rectors making a decision to terminate the BSUN, the Assembly shall appoint a liquidation commission to settle all matters pertaining to the liquidation.

The BSUN property shall be divided among the member Universities in proportion to the financial resources they have contributed for the whole period of their membership.

Appendix 1. List of the Established National Secretariats

Azerbaijan: Baku State University, Baku

Bulgaria: Varna Free University

Greece: University of the Aegean, Rhodes

Moldavia: Technical University of Moldavia, Kishinev

Romania: University “Ovidius” of Constantza

Russia: Taganrog University of Radio Engineering, Taganrog

Turkey: Istanbul University, Istanbul

Appendix 2. List of the BSUN Consortia

Consortium of Universities in Economics, Kiev National University of Economics

Appendix 3. List of BSUN Centers

Center ACADEMICON, for the Accreditation of Curricula, Programs, Academic Titles and Quality Assessment (Middle East University, Ankara, Turkey).

Center for Coordination of Common Graduate Programs (University of the Aegean, Greece)

Center for Coordination of Summer Schools and Short Term Certificate Courses (Zhitomir Institute of Engineering and Technology, Zhitomir, Ukraine).

Center for Joint Research Projects (Azerbaijan Technical University, Baku, and Azerbaijan).

Center for the BSUN Publications (Varna Free University, Varna, Bulgaria).

Center for Advanced Engineering Sciences (University "Ovidius" of Constantza, Romania)