

BLACK SEA ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION GROUP (BSEC)

Founded in 1992 to promote economic co-operation in the Black Sea region. Priority areas of interest include: trade and economic development; banking and finance; communications; energy; transport; agriculture and agro-industry; healthcare and pharmaceuticals; environmental protection; tourism; science and technology; exchange of statistical data and economic information; combating organized crime, illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons and radioactive materials, all acts of terrorism and illegal immigration.

Members. Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine.

Observers. Austria, Egypt, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Tunisia.

The *Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation* is the BSEC parliamentary dimension. The *BSEC Business Council* is composed of representatives from the business circles of the member states. The *Black Sea Trade and Development Bank* is considered as the financial pillar of the BSEC. There is also an *International Center for Black Sea Studies* and a *Coordination Center for the Exchange of Statistical Data and Economic Information*.

Headquarters: İstinye Cad., Müşir Fuad Paşa Yals, Eski Tersane 80860, İstinye, İstanbul, Turkey.

Website: <http://www.bsec.gov.tr>

Secretary-General: Valeri Chechelashvili (Georgia).

DANUBE COMMISSION

History and Membership. The Danube Commission was constituted in 1949 according to the Convention on the regulation of shipping on the Danube signed in Belgrade on 18 Aug. 1948. The Belgrade Convention, amended by the Additional Protocol of 26 March 1998, declares that navigation on the Danube from Kelheim to the Black Sea (with access to the sea through the Sulina arm and the Sulina Canal) is equally free and open to the nationals, merchant shipping and merchandise of all states as to harbour and navigation fees as well as conditions of merchant navigation. The Commission holds annual sessions and is composed of one representative from each of its 11 member countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Functions. To ensure that the provisions of the Belgrade Convention are carried out; to establish a uniform buoying system on all navigable waterways; to establish the basic regulations for navigation on the river and ensure facilities for shipping; to co-ordinate the regulations for river, customs and sanitation control as well as the hydrometeorological service; to collect relevant statistical data concerning navigation on the Danube; to propose measures for the prevention of pollution of the Danube caused by navigation; and to harmonize regulations of the Danube Commission member states with European Union regulations on inland waterway navigation.

Official languages. German, French, Russian.

Headquarters: Benczúr utca 25, H-1068 Budapest, Hungary.

e-mail: Secretariat@danubecom-intern.org

President: Dr Stanko Nick (Croatia).

Director-General: Capt. Danail Nedialkov (Bulgaria).