



PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 18 December 2020

ICBSS - SFedU Webinar on

“The Impact of Covid-19 on Education and Science:

Challenges and Prospects for Cooperation in the wider Black Sea region”

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies ([ICBSS](#)) and the Southern Federal University ([SFedU](#)) successfully co-organised a Webinar on “*The Impact of Covid-19 on Education and Science: Challenges and Prospects for Cooperation in the wider Black Sea region*”, on Friday **18 December 2020**.

Given the fact that Covid-19 pandemic has brought a global scale uncertainty to all aspects of everyday life, to every corner and region of the World, as well as that regional cooperation and exchange of knowledge is crucial for addressing and overcoming global and regional challenges, the Webinar’s **objective** was to open a dialogue on how this uncertainty impacted education, science and cooperation in these fields, forcing them to adapt and change to the new context.

Under the moderation of **Dr. Anton AFANASYEV**, State expert on Science & Technology, Authorized representative for International Relations with the BSEC Member States, Senior Researcher at the Southern Federal University and **Ms. Georgia CHANTZI**, Research and Policy Development Manager, International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), the prominent speakers and participants had the opportunity to discuss on the following topics: a) *Impact of COVID-19 on general and secondary vocational education institutions*, b) *Transformation of the higher education during the pandemic: temporary or permanent*, c) *Academic and scientific mobility in the times of the COVID-19: digital vs real*, d) *International scientific cooperation during the global pandemic*.

During the first part of the Webinar, entitled “*Education and Science in the COVID-19 era: Views from the Region*”, **Ms. Evgeniya PAVLOVA**, Head of Unit, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation, **Ms. Olga MOLOVTSEVA**, Deputy Head of Unit, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, **Dr. Taner ALBAYRAK**, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Maritime Business Management, Piri Reis University, **Dr. Gerasimos RODOTHEATOS**, Teaching Scholar on Public International Law, Panteion Uni. of Athens, Teaching Staff & Researcher, SmartAL Project, and **Prof. Sibel SUZEN**, Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Ankara University, analyzed the current situation in the fields of education and science, from their perspective.

At the second part of the online event, the **Open Round-Table Discussion**, panelists and participants exchanged their views on questions like the following ones inter alia: *How do education institutions adapt to the context the global pandemic? Were universities ready for such a challenge? Can digital transformation be a universal solution in the field of education and science? What are the odds of the digital*

academic mobility to be viewed as academic mobility in the future? Does science and technology in the times of COVID-19 incite regional and global competition or bring new opportunities for cooperation?

The Webinar was attended by regional stakeholders from the wider Black Sea region, involved in the field of education and science, experts, teachers, researchers, representatives of the respective Ministries, regional and international organizations, and other interested parties. Indicatively, interventions were delivered by **Ms. Sandra VUJINOVIC**, Executive Manager at the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), and **Mr. Sahak Sargsyan**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia in the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

During **Q&A session**, participants and organisers had an interactive and fruitful discussion and highlighted important issues for future talks and next steps.

The Webinar built on the discussion on education that has started last year, during the [Regional Stakeholders Conference on the Black Sea Synergy](#), and set the basis for a constructive follow-up with future targeted webinars and project-oriented synergies on the subject.

This was the seventh of a series of webinars planned by the ICBSS to launch a new era of online meetings on key issues targeting the wider Black Sea region.

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About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.