

**Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)  
Strategy and Work Programme  
2014 – 2016**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Declaration establishing the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) states that the RCC is intended to sustain focused regional cooperation in South East Europe (SEE) through a regionally owned and lead framework that also supports European and Euro-Atlantic integration of its participants. Throughout the last five years the RCC has maintained its focus on this defined objective and undertaken activities to achieve it, making it possible for officials and specialists from the countries in the region, which only short time earlier were in conflict, to meet and discuss subjects of common interest and define joint regional cooperation activities.

Having become a recognised and respected regional organization, RCC developed in 2010 its first three-year Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013 (SWP 2011-2013). This defined its objectives, priorities and work programme for the period. The choices made were based on its knowledge of national policies pursued by the countries in the region and the needs of the region as a whole, all within the priority areas assigned to it. The strategy was endorsed by the RCC Annual Meeting and the SEECP Summit held in Istanbul in June, 2010.

A range of specific targets in each of the priority areas of the SWP 2011-2013 have been achieved, namely: South East Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC) proved to be the key catalyst and the main development vehicle for SEE 2020 strategy which included a substantial dimension provided by the Social Agenda for the Western Balkans 2020; several initiatives were launched regarding sustainable energy development and energy efficiency, road and air transport and water management and climate change in the SEE; Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism to measure progress achieved by the 2011-2013 Regional Strategic Document in the area of Justice and Home Affairs became operational; creating regional mechanism of cooperation among the Chiefs of Military Intelligence (SEEMIC), the Heads of the South East European National Security Authorities (SEENSA), and the South East European Counter-Intelligence Chiefs Forum (SEECIC) enhanced the dialogue and common analytical activities in this area; finalizing the Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans and implementing the second phase of the Ljubljana Process through the RCC Task Force on Culture and Society contributed to smart dimensions of the SEE growth; the parliamentary cooperation both in the SEECP format and related to the acquis adoption in the Western Balkans has got a boost in the reporting period; and networking and cooperation through the European Association of Public Service Media in SEE and Academy on Media Law, both established with the RCC support, became an asset in the media development in the region.

Furthermore, an effective cooperation and coordination with the country holding the Chair-in-Office (C-i-O) of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) has been noticeable. There was clear progress in increasing the capacity of countries from the SEE to display a common stance in formulating regionally attainable goals and in strengthening synergy in their regional activities. In addition, good results have also been achieved in the process of streamlining regional initiatives and task forces in SEE.

However, progress has not been uniform due to challenges of different nature, in particular the oscillating bilateral political relations and other unresolved issues in the region, the economic and financial crisis with its social consequences, developments within European Union (EU) and in the broader international scene. In addition, harnessing of all opportunities in certain areas of cooperation was not always successful.

Based on the success of the SWP 2011-2013, as well as the difficulties encountered, together with a more in depth knowledge of the region and its needs, the RCC has developed its second Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016 (SWP 2014-2016). This document sets out the sectoral priorities chosen as well as the actions it intends to undertake to effect them. The sectoral priorities identified by the RCC are generally borne out from regional and national priorities.

The RCC will continue to work towards increasing the value and substance of regional cooperation thus promoting issues of importance to the entire region and further mainstreaming regional cooperation in the countries' political agenda. Increasing the coherence and focus of planned activities by designing new, or upgrading existing regional platforms for national policy reforms, the RCC will remain open to possible new initiatives and ideas with a clear regional dimension.

With its new Strategy, RCC assumes a greater responsibility in fostering longer-term planning and vision building in regional cooperation, thus also reflecting the growing capacities of its main stakeholders. This Strategy is designed to be a platform supporting emergence and implementation of future strategies and has in mind the horizon 2020 by which time the countries in the region should be sufficiently prepared for EU accession. In that context, South East Europe 2020 Strategy, whose development is being coordinated by the RCC, lies at the heart of RCC's activities going forward. This regional response to Europe 2020 is being put forward by the countries to help anchor their reform efforts, support the EU accession process and focus joint action on increasing competitiveness and creating jobs. The role of the RCC in SEE 2020, as defined by the Tirana Ministerial Statement of November 2012, is to coordinate the overall implementation effort and monitor and report to the countries on the progress being in the achievement of set objectives. RCC's Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016 reflects this central position that RCC intends to have in this process.

In order to fulfil this role, RCC is setting up a broad coordination mechanism, a comprehensive monitoring system and a clear governance structure. In addition to working together with the governments, RCC will provide support to the established and recognised regional structures and other partners in a particular field and where necessary undertake additional activities to address gaps identified. The main stakeholders and contributors to the reporting system are presented in the Annex II.

The SEE 2020 strategy places regional cooperation in a clear and coherent framework, linking national priorities with regional platforms and identifying the most important gaps to be addressed over the long term. The quantitative strategic targets adopted by the region's economies in the areas of economic growth, trade, investment, education, employment and governance are being translated into policy objectives, with plans for action at both national and regional level being developed.

The breadth of SEE 2020 - with its pillars in integrated, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, within a good governance framework - enables the RCC to adapt its approach and combine activities in its priority areas to best address the multi-faceted, present and future challenges in the region. Economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, justice and home affairs, security cooperation and human capital development remain main areas of RCC's intervention, alongside with other significant areas such as parliamentary cooperation, media development, gender mainstreaming, and civil society development. All these areas are fully aligned with the region's main priorities and strategic interest and are appropriately reflected in the SWP 2014-2016.

As the operational arm of the SEECF, the RCC will fully cooperate with the SEECF C-i-O, to translate political guidance into operational plans and execute a number of general functions in line with its mandate. The SEE 2020 strategy is putting forward a system of governance for support the reform process, whereby clear mechanisms are being put in place to ensure de-centralized implementation and enable regular monitoring of progress. To this aim, The RCC will regularly organise political summits across all pillars of SEE2020. To support these events, the RCC will prepare progress reports, based on the analytical work provided by other regional organisations, national governments and other contracted contributors. The RCC will engage with governments to ensure advanced political commitments of its participants from SEE and bring about a climate conducive for the successful implementation of envisaged regional and national strategies, programmes and projects. It will pay particular attention to strengthening its dialogue with international partners active in SEE, enhancing its guiding and monitoring capacities over regional cooperation in SEE and further align its scope of work with the EU enlargement requirements thereby

serving as an integrated regional platform. In performing these activities, it will be guided by the principles of regionally owned, driven and all-inclusive cooperation.

Enhanced communication will be an important tool in fulfilling objectives of this strategy. Its goal is to highlight the RCC's mission, support achievement of the organization's goals, and increase impact of results of its activities, by interacting with the media on a regular basis and by developing and strengthening relationships with governments, public officials, opinion-makers, diplomats, international community, think-tanks, academia, business community, etc.

The implementation of the SWP 2014-2016 requires additional resources dedicated to the implementation of the SEE 2020 to complement the current RCC budget and human resources. It goes in line with planned additional financial contributions by the EU for two initiatives that were taken over by the RCC in 2011 and 2012 (Ljubljana Process and South East Europe Investment Committee). Actions developed with other partners (SEE governments, regional initiatives, international organisations, etc.) will also benefit from these contributions.

This document is divided into two sections. The first provides a brief description of three main layers<sup>i</sup> of the SWP: (1) SEE 2020 Strategy – *Job Creating Growth and EU Integration*; (2) JHA and Security Cooperation - *Stability and Rule of Law*; and (3) Cross-cutting Issues – *Extending Participation, Widening Partnerships*, as well as (4) main horizontal functions of the RCC; including narrative for each layer, with an overview of its regional dimension; the overall strategy; the priorities identified by the RCC and the list of actions intended to be undertaken to fulfil and effect the priorities. The second section (Annex I) is the work programme showing in detail the objectives, actions to be undertaken to achieve them, expected results, main partners and the time frame for each activity. The dynamics of implementation of the work programme is dependent on the commitment and involvement of all concerned stakeholders.

In addition, SEE 2020 initial set of objectives and coordination mechanism agreed among RCC and key stakeholders and partners is presented in Annex II. The overview of regional initiatives and task forces relevant for the implementation of the SWP 2014-2016 could be found in Annex III and list of acronyms in Annex IV.

## **2. STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME**

### **2.1 SOUTH EAST EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY – JOB CREATING GROWTH AND EU INTEGRATION**

Concentrating RCC's activities on a smaller set of tangible and result-oriented activities, while building closer relationships with national institutions and regional structures, has proven to be a cornerstone of a successful regional cooperation strategy. Looking to the next strategy cycle, RCC intends to sharpen the focus even further through centring a large majority of its efforts on the South East Europe 2020 – a job-creating growth and EU integration Strategy.

#### **2.1.1 Overview and achievements**

The socio-economic situation in the region of SEE remains difficult. Growth has plummeted and is not expected to rebound in the short term. The fiscal situation remains tight in most of the countries, limiting the scope of action and reform. In the Western Balkans alone, the economic crisis has erased more than 800,000 jobs, thus putting a strain on private sector economic activity as well as government budgetary resources with a direct impact on citizens' welfare. The challenge faced by the countries is immense and impacts a broad array of policy areas, with diminishing ability of economies to invest in human capital and infrastructure, or address climate and resource challenges. Low competitiveness of the countries, as demonstrated by the continued shrinking share in the global trade over the past three years is worrying and requires swift action. The main challenge for SEE economies

now is to commit to, and sustain the implementation of, long-term reforms aimed at increasing competitiveness and promoting sustainable, inclusive and balanced development.

To help address some of these challenges, RCC has invested considerable effort during the previous strategy cycle to help its participants formulate a regional growth and competitiveness strategy – South East Europe 2020. In line with the mandate received from the SEECP and the European Commission, RCC has led the SEE countries in the identification of, and agreement to, a number of headline targets to underline the focus on growth and competitiveness. Eleven specific regional targets have been identified (along with those at the national level) covering smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in addition to integrated growth (promoting closer regional integration) and governance for growth (emphasizing the importance of good governance) – the latter two being identified as crucial by the countries. The targets, selected and agreed upon by RCC’s participants, cover a wide span of policy areas such as trade, investment, convergence with EU, employment, education, productivity, governance and others. Though limited by the availability and comparability of data to measure progress, the political targets are still potent in securing political commitments and charting out a road map for additional work to be done in all sectors covered. Following their adoption by the region’s Ministers in charge of the Economy, at their meeting in Tirana on November 9, 2012, RCC has engaged a number of national, regional and international partners in a broad, consultative process to develop the SEE 2020 Strategy and action plan, in order for it to be ready for adoption during late 2013.

In addition to helping anchor the long-term reform efforts of the governments in the region, SEE 2020 and its development process has also been used to assess the current regional cooperation framework in South East Europe. Given the complexity and scope of the Strategy, RCC and its participants have been developing the SEE 2020 through a de-centralized process whereby specific regional partners were identified in each of the main policy dimensions of the SEE 2020 to champion the activities on the Strategy development within that specific dimension, under RCC’s leadership. 14 policy dimensions were identified within the 5 pillars of the SEE 2020, with 12 regional structures acting as primary dimension coordinators (Annex II includes an overview of the SEE 2020 coordination mechanism). When assigning these roles, RCC took into account the capacity of the regional structures to engage in the process along with the governance mechanisms employed by the structures enabling a clear flow of information from the regional to the national level and vice versa.

Furthermore, the process has also demonstrated that the RCC Secretariat remains alert to the needs of the region – RCC’s ability to respond quickly and re-prioritize its engagements in different areas illustrates the importance it attaches to the SEE 2020 process. In order to meet the challenge of managing and coordinating the SEE 2020 development and implementation, RCC has been able to integrate a number of different activities spanning various sectors - economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, building human capital and, at least partially, justice and home affairs - into a comprehensive set of overarching priorities and complementary actions geared towards supporting the implementation of SEE 2020 over the next three years.

### **2.1.2 Regional priorities**

The priorities for regional cooperation put forward through the SEE 2020 growth framework are clearly outlined by the 11 regional headline targets adopted by the government, grouped into five pillars of SEE 2020 and further carved out through 14 policy dimensions prioritized for regional cooperation as illustrated in Annex II. RCC and its participants established a set of key principles for the SEE 2020 development and implementation that will also guide RCC’s activities in the implementation of its Strategy and Work Programme over the next three years: (i) regional relevance – implementing only those activities that clearly add value to national efforts, (ii) support to EU accession – strengthening the accession effort and contributing to further alignment of the economic governance of the region with that applied in the EU, (iii) decentralized implementation – sharing of responsibilities with other regional and national partners within a mutually agreed cooperation framework, (iv) commitment to monitoring of progress – clearly identified targets and indicators that

would be measured throughout the process, and (v) political support – ensuring that the political guidance and horizontal oversight of the SEE 2020 process comes from the highest political level.

In addition to the horizontal priorities and principles noted above, RCC will be further aligning its sectoral work with the priorities put forward by the SEE 2020 vision and the accompanying set of regional and national targets. To assist the governments in implementing the SEE 2020 Strategy, RCC will be focusing on the following set of sectoral priorities -

***Integrated growth*** pillar, as foreseen by the SEE 2020 vision, envisions regional action to promote deeper trade and investment linkages and make use of the synergies of the regional market. In this area, RCC envisions the following priority as the basis of its action for the next three years:

- *Greater trade and investment integration*, promoting regional economic integration through closer trade and investment linkages. As foreseen by SEE 2020 Strategy, a strong focus will be given to supporting development and implementation of policies that are non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable, and that enhance the flow of goods, investment, services and persons within the region. Line ministries dealing with trade and investment issues from the region are currently represented in ***CEFTA*** and ***SEEIC*** structures, and these structures will continue to serve as RCC's main counterparts in the areas of trade and investment integration.

***Smart growth*** represents the commitment of the region to innovate and compete on value-added rather than labour costs in the long run. Targeted investments in education, retaining the best and brightest talent that the SEE region has to offer and raising the absorptive capacity of business and research communities to use existing technologies and develop new ones will be at the focus of regional action. RCC intends to concentrate on the following priorities:

- *Enhanced regional cooperation in higher education, including doctoral studies*. These efforts should be streamlined and effected through the development of systematic regional actions. RCC will work with regional stakeholders, such as the ***Education Reform Initiative for South Eastern Europe***, towards new and innovative modalities of cooperation in these areas.
- *Strengthened research capacities for innovation*. There is a need to establish transparent and effective regional mechanisms, such as envisaged ***Regional Research Platform***, able to develop and implement identified national and regional strategies and platforms, along the lines of proclaimed goals of SEE 2020 Strategy.
- *Streamlined regional efforts in cultural and creative sectors to reap the benefits of technological advances*. This would lead to the development of new business models for culture and creative industries, expanding the traditional role of cultural institutions in providing access to cultural content with the aim of preservation for future generations. Such an approach should be used in the implementation of the next phase of the ***Ljubljana Process***, development of the ***Regional Film Fund***, cooperation among national museums in the region and development of joint history teaching materials, etc.
- *Digital Society development* through promoting an open and competitive market for Information Society, strengthening information and communication technologies research and education and ensuring an inclusive Information Society. Priorities in this area have already been established by the ***Electronic South East Europe Initiative*** (e-SEE) and its e-SEE Agenda Plus. RCC intends to liaise directly with the e-SEE structures to assist in the implementation of commitments made by the SEE governments.

***Sustainable growth*** puts forward a regional commitment to greener and more energy-efficient development while raising the level of private sector competitiveness and entrepreneurship. Here, RCC intends to focus on the following regional priorities:

- *Increased use of renewable energy, improved energy efficiency and reduced GHG emissions in the region:* Taking into account the need to integrate EU 20-20-20 requirements into SEE 2020 and the fact that the energy sector is the major contributor to the GHG emissions, the **Energy Community Secretariat** will be the major partner in effecting activities and reaching expected results within this priority. In addition, the RCC will further support implementation of Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative (SEDRI) jointly launched with the Central European Initiative (CEI).
- *Sustainable and integrated transport developed in the region* through concerted efforts in three main areas: (i) *Strengthen air traffic cooperation in the region* - Based on the Airspace Feasibility Study, which intends to provide a more comprehensive picture on the development of air transport sector, supporting the economic growth in the region, the RCC will play a central role in coordinating efforts in this direction; (ii) *Promote an integrated approach towards the development of road transport* - RCC will identify and address gaps for more efficient planning, designing and implementation of road projects in SEE; and (iii) *Political support to railway sector development in SEE:* RCC will provide an adequate environment for the promotion of a regional approach to address and overcome the current challenges in this field. This will also further align the activities with the SEE 2020 framework by giving priority to more environmentally friendly modes of transport such as rail. RCC will rely strongly on **South East Europe Transport Observatory** (SEETO) as one of its main partners in this area.
- *Regional environmental and climate change cooperation strengthened:* The RCC will perform its environmental and climate change activities as much as possible within the SEE 2020 Strategy and Danube Region Strategy frameworks. It will focus on helping ensure participation of local authorities associations, civil society and media in the process as well as promoting integrated approach which is the key element of this macro-regional strategy including territorial integration, inter-sectoral cooperation, multi-stakeholder involvement and multi-level governance. Particular focus will be put on climate change mitigation and adaptation and integrated water resources management alongside involvement of relevant players always taking into account broad ECRAN scope and the existence of national and regional initiatives as well as need to avoid overlaps and to benefit from established cooperation.
- **Regional Environmental Centre** (REC) will remain RCC's main partner in this area.
- *Increased competitiveness* through targeted regional action directed at building a stronger industrial base. Rekindling manufacturing and related services and facilitating emergence and strengthening of regional value chains will be one of the main priorities of the region in the medium to long term. The global and European business environment has changed radically. It now requires a holistic approach to value chains, from sustainable management and access to inputs and raw materials to limiting negative impacts of outputs and processes utilized. Sustainable growth pillar of the SEE 2020 Strategy - and its competitiveness dimension in particular - will address some of the main regional priorities in this respect and the main interlocutor for RCC in this area will be the **SEEIC** and its Working Group on Competitiveness.

In the **Inclusive growth** pillar, the region's economies are making a commitment to work towards further skills development, employment creation and labour market participation by all, including vulnerable groups and minorities. RCC's work in this area will focus on the following priority:

- *Social development* by concerted regional efforts to improve skills and alleviate skills gaps and mismatches, promote targeted labour mobility, strengthen labour market governance institutions and advance better health outcomes. In addition to sharing analysis, learning from each other's experiences, and drawing on regional expertise, RCC members are identifying joint regional responses that are needed in the inclusive growth domain of the SEE 2020



Strategy. In this area, RCC works directly with an *Inter-governmental Working Group on Employment and Social Issues*, originally set up under the Social Agenda 2020 process.

**Governance for growth** pillar outlines the need for a substantial upgrading of the public administrations and their capacities to strengthen the rule of law and reduce corruption so as to create a business-friendly environment. Priorities identified for regional action by RCC includes the following:

- *Streamlining regional justice and home affairs activities in the Governance for Growth Pillar*, as a part of implementation of the SEE 2020 strategy. As most other policy dimensions of SEE 2020 are impacted by the quality and effectiveness of governance, regional cooperation efforts in this area will focus on providing clear links between the governance dimensions of SEE 2020 Strategy - Effective Public Services and Anti-Corruption – with the rest of the policy dimensions covered by the SEE 2020. This will enable viewing governance challenges in a holistic way, as part of the overall business enabling environment, rather than in isolation as has been done in the past. In addressing this priority, RCC will liaise directly with *NALAS* and *RESPA* in the domain of Effective Public Services, while *RAI* will remain RCC's main counterpart in the area of anti-corruption.

### 2.1.3 RCC Work Programme

To make the above priorities operational in the context of SEE 2020 Strategy, RCC envisions implementing the following programme of activities in the five pillars of SEE 2020:

#### *Integrated growth*

##### **a. Trade and investment integration:**

RCC will work on promoting and facilitating trade and investment as one of the highest priority actions, engaging with the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and South East Europe Investment Committee (SEEIC) as the main interlocutors in these domains. Working with the structures of CEFTA, the RCC will help coordinate trade-related activities with other relevant actions being implemented within the SEE 2020 framework.

In the area of investment promotion, RCC will work with the SEEIC and its structures to put forward a sustainable mechanism for raising the investment profile of the region, working both on horizontal promotion as well as specific industries and sectors that are of common interest to the economies in the region. Working Group on Investment Policy and Promotion bringing together the representatives of the Investment Promotion Agencies and the relevant Ministries was set up under the framework of SEEIC to further the accomplishment of the investment targets put forward by the SEE 2020. RCC will also continue to provide the Secretariat function to the SEEIC going forward.

RCC will also promote further integration and harmonization of capital markets in the region in order to increase access to finance for the private sector and increase efficiency of the financial system.

#### *Smart growth*

##### **b. Strengthen regional cooperation in education:**

(i) Creation of the Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation in Higher Education - As a follow-up to the RCC supported STREW Project, Regional Platform gathers Higher Education Institutions and Authorities from the region, aiming to foster a Regional 'collective voice' in higher education that resonates regionally, nationally and internationally. This mechanism will encourage strategic level debate in the region on higher education issues which will impact on its development, in accordance with the SEE 2020 Strategy.

(ii) Support for the regional cooperation in doctoral studies - Regional programs will be developed in line with the Letter of Intent, signed by rectors of 9 universities from the region. These programs will foster cooperation among universities in promoting and supporting mobility of doctoral candidates, develop infrastructure for mutual recognition of awarded doctoral degrees, initiate exchange of post-doctoral researchers, participate in collaborative research grants in order to increase institutional capacities both in research expertise and infrastructure, etc.

(iii) Support to establishment of the Education Reform Initiative for SEE - As a member of ERI SEE Governing Board, the RCC is providing advise on the process of institutionalization of ERI SEE and its Secretariat. It is necessary to speed up approval procedures for ratification of the Host Country Agreement on the Establishment of the ERI SEE and its Secretariat, and subsequent selecting procedure for the ERI SEE Secretariat's staff. Idea to develop Regional Clusters of Knowledge under the umbrella of ERI SEE was welcomed from the beginning by the RCC, which recognised the possibility for the clusters to become set of streamlined regional activities, to be further developed and implemented by ERI SEE, possibly under the umbrella of the EU Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training.

(iv) Teaching Modern Southeast European History - Alternative Educational Materials - RCC will cooperate with the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) to provide a multi-perspective and participative approach for the teaching of the tormented and divisive recent history of our region, thus fostering democratic values, reconciliation and compassion among today's youth, the leaders of tomorrow. The program will be based on the CDRSEE's successful Joint History Project (JHP), which included textbooks in 10 languages, on the earlier history of the region and intensive training for teachers across the Balkans. The JHP II will address the teaching of most recent history (post-World War II history including the wars of the 1990s), by publishing two textbooks in Western Balkan languages, as well as a comic book to target younger students. The aim will also be to increase cooperation among teacher's associations, education ministries and civil society organisations across the region. The ultimate outcome will be to have more than a thousand teachers trained in the new teaching methodologies and hundreds of thousands of students with increased critical thinking skills, enlightened and prepared to develop peaceful and democratic values.

**c. *Research and Innovation – Establishment of the Regional Research Platform:***

After the development and promotion of the RSRDI, the RCC will work towards the establishment of the envisaged Regional Research Platform - transparent and efficient regional mechanism which will supervise and govern the implementation and updating of the strategy and its action plans. This structure would: a) gradually take over coordination of donors activity in the region; b) improve governance and effectiveness in the field of research and innovation; c) establish the Research Excellence Fund, which aims at strengthening the level of research and its quality in key scientific domains; d) develop Centers of Excellence Program, focusing on research areas with comparative regional advantage to enable a regional smart specialization; e) create regional technology transfer facility and f) establish innovation finance facility.

**d. *Culture and Creative Sectors:***

(i) Continuation of Ljubljana Process - Continuation of this project will build upon achieved results in its previous phase and focus on concrete, tangible results in rehabilitation of cultural heritage monuments in the region and their optimal contribution in economic and touristic development of local communities and countries in the region.

(ii) Establishment of the SEE Museums Network - In accordance with the mandate given by the Ministers of Culture of SEE, the RCC Secretariat will continue to facilitate the activities

on development of the SEE Museums Network, with the aim of fostering cross-border cooperation between cultural institutions and operators in the educational, social and economic dimension in the work of museums.

(iii) Development of the Regional Film Fund - The RCC will coordinate activities towards improving conditions for enhanced regional cooperation in the film industry in SEE. The Conclusions of the regional and European film industry experts at the Regional Film Forum, held in Sarajevo in June 2012 and the expressed political support by the countries (Council of Ministers of Culture of the South East Europe) and international partners provide the basis for regional actions. Establishment of the Regional Film Fund (RFF) would complement available funds at national and European level (EURIMAGES, NORDISK FILM & TV FOND), with the aim of strengthening cross-border market for audio-visual work in SEE. As part of this action the RFF would channel public funds into independent audio-visual projects from the region, with a view to creating a multiplier effect for generating further investment, thus producing the potential for larger returns from this growing market, strengthening the companies and achieving sustainability for the sector.

**e. *Digital Society development:***

As part of its efforts to advance smart growth within the SEE 2020 framework, RCC will continue promoting information society development through continued support to the electronic South East Europe Initiative (e-SEE) and the implementation of its e-SEE Agenda Plus, fully aligned with the objectives of the SEE 2020 Strategy. The main activities in this area will include the establishment of a single SEE information space, strengthening innovation and investment in ICT research and education, and creating an inclusive information society. RCC will cooperate with the e-SEE initiative, as the main coordinator of the Digital Society and Cultural and Creative Industries dimension of the SEE 2020 Strategy coordinate its activities with those of other dimensions and provide support to its structures in the medium term, so as to help strengthen its governance and ensure sustainability over the longer term.

*Sustainable growth*

**f. *Contribute to increased use of renewable energy, improved energy efficiency and reduced GHG emissions in the region:***

(i) Building upon the Energy Community achievements with regard to EU 20-20-20 targets, with the assistance of the ECS, the RCC will derive targets which are relevant for SEE 2020 Strategy, integrating them into this strategy. Activities necessary for completing the SEE 2020 relating to EU 20-20-20 will be discussed; possible plans, role and contribution of the ECS and other partners defined, including timing and budgeting. Due attention will be put on issues of GHG emissions reduction in the region as a basis for defining regional GHG emission reduction target and other activities compliant to SEE 2020 requirements. Climate component priorities of the ECRAN including primarily climate policy, strategic planning, mitigation, adaptation, scenarios, modelling, monitoring, reporting, verification, carbon markets and climate finance will be important for SEE 2020 activities concerning the GHG emission reduction.

(ii) Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative (SEDRI) offers platform for cooperation in information and best-practices exchange and fund raising. There is room for further strengthening the initiative particularly in relation to facilitating transfer of advanced and mature sustainable energy technologies, replication of successful projects and strengthening links between the ``bottom-up`` and ``top-down`` players.

**g. *Contribute to the development of sustainable and integrated transport in the region:***

(i) RCC will provide support for the preparation of Airspace Feasibility Study and monitoring follow-up activities in close cooperation with the relevant EU and regional structures,

including EC DG MOVE and the Implementation of Single European Sky in SEE (ISIS) Programme Secretariat. Furthermore, within continued support in implementing the Single European Sky (SES), the RCC will be more focused on streamlining this activity towards more integrated and competitive market in the SEE.

(ii) In order to promote an integrated approach towards more developed road sector in the region, RCC, in cooperation with the experts of the relevant European road associations, South East Europe Transport Observatory and experts in the region will contribute to more sustainable mobility and accessibility to the region as well as within the region. This activity will help the transport regional structures to better associate with SEE 2020, thus contributing to greener road transport.

(iii) The RCC will mobilise expertise and continue to consult with relevant authorities in the region with the aim of addressing urgent need to reconstruct and modernize the railway system in SEE, thus providing a wide political support to the railway sector development. To that aim, the RCC will define, together with national administrations, SEETO and specialized EU railway agencies, the precise steps in order to discuss regional priority projects, infrastructure needs and financial availabilities as well as the legal and institutional railway reforms and horizontal requirements in this field.

***h. Strengthen regional environmental and climate change cooperation:***

(i) Activities within the Resource Efficiency dimension of the SEE 2020 Strategy Sustainable Growth pillar, including all relevant national and regional partners and coordinated by REC, will focus on developing regional targets and indicators which will link economic growth to priority environmental and climate aspects.

(ii) RCC will continue with its contribution to the EU Danube Region Strategy implementation ensuring the participation of local authorities and civil society, promoting inter-sectoral cooperation and other dimensions of integrated approach, co-organizing and hosting workshops and supporting relevant regional players.

(iii) Having in mind high level of climate change vulnerability of the region and internationally legally binding commitments of the countries from the region, RCC will focus on climate change adaptation through supporting awareness raising. It will also promote need for strengthening the role of civil society and local authorities and for integration of climate change adaptation into sectoral policies.

(iv) Water sector is the most jeopardized with the changed climate conditions. RCC will work on mobilizing and supporting regional players in the area of integrated water resources management thus promoting private sector involvement in water infrastructure development.

***i. Increased competitiveness:***

Together with its partners, RCC Secretariat will work on targeted interventions to strengthen the regional industrial base and promote development of manufacturing as one of the main aspects of sustainable growth under the SEE 2020 framework.

In addition to a horizontal view, a sectoral approach will be needed and RCC will work with its members on identifying priority regional sectors and designing interventions that are most likely to remove obstacles for the development and strengthening of regional value chains within these sectors. These interventions would be targeted at eliminating trade and investment barriers and promoting stronger linkages between the economic operators in the region while helping integrate them into European and global value chains. Actions to promote investment and enhance access to finance, enable restructuring, and increase value added in these sectors through innovation and human capital-related interventions would be developed. Working on specific sectors/sub-sectors will enable tailored policy interventions

and easier monitoring of progress and attribution of impact. RCC Secretariat will work mostly through SEEIC (and its structures) as the main interlocutor in this area, while establishing strong links with other regional platforms dealing with education, research, innovation, and other dimensions under the SEE 2020 framework.

#### *Inclusive growth*

##### **j. Social development:**

RCC will engage in the sphere of social development through coordinating the implementation of the inclusive growth component of the SEE 2020 strategy. It will focus its activities in promoting regional approaches to social development and inclusion in the areas of employment, education and health in order to ensure that all contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth and development. This work will build on the achievements of the Social Agenda activities of the RCC during the preceding period.

To further the regional cooperation on employment and job creation policies, RCC has set up an inter-governmental Working Group on Employment and Social Development that will help coordinate actions in the employment dimension of the SEE 2020 Strategy. This will include the coordination of regional actions towards job creation, promoting labour mobility and jointly improved governance of labour markets. RCC will also act as a secretariat to the Working Group on Employment and Social Development as well as other structures and task forces set up to further the implementation of the SEE 2020 objectives.

In the inclusive education area, RCC will coordinate efforts in the framework of its platform “New Skills for New Jobs” to ensure strengthened coordination among relevant national and regional stakeholders to ensure job creation becomes a central part of all policies. Furthermore, RCC will promote the establishment of regional approaches to permanent skills gap analysis and skills provision.

RCC will organize regional activities in the field of Roma Civil Registration. RCC will organize a series of meetings in order to find common solution for Roma Civil Registration as a part of the inclusive growth pillar of SEE 2020.

RCC will continue to support the SEE Health Network, a well established and productive network, which coordinates the health dimension of SEE 2020 Strategy. Main efforts in this area will be directed towards improved health outcomes, reduced social inequities in health and promotion of health in all policies.

#### *Governance for growth*

##### **k. Streamlining JHA activities in the Governance for Growth, as a part of implementation of the SEE 2020 strategy:**

(i) Support existing initiatives in the area of fight against corruption. Particular engagement will be dedicated to the organization of periodic meetings of the Directors of National Institutions and Agencies for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime of the SEECP.

(ii) Improvement of anti-corruption training will be targeted through SEE Judicial Training Network (SEEJTN) as a platform for integrated legal education on anti-corruption in the region, based on a common forum of cooperation between RAI and SEELS, in partnership with GIZ.

(iii) Initiate JHA related activities supportive to development of business enabling environment. The focus of work will be to strengthen and organize work of existing informal networks of experts dealing with highly specialized topics like financial investigations, frauds, identity thefts, confiscation and recovery of assets and cyber crime.

(v) Improve regional legal framework for judicial cooperation. In addition the cooperation between prosecutors and the police in criminal matters needs to be strengthened. Regional Working Groups Meetings should be drafting text of the regional document(s) which should enable progressive and dynamic transition from mutual legal assistance towards mutual recognition while taking full account of fundamental rights.

RCC expects that the new Strategy, its approach and activities planned within the SEE 2020 framework will yield several important results at the end of the period, including, but not limited to:

- A clear roadmap for regional cooperation in the areas of trade, investment, education, R&D and innovation, competitiveness employment, social development and governance, with identified objectives, measures, accompanying actions, timetables, defined roles and responsibilities of participating partners and indication of budgets in all areas.
- Fully streamlined regional activities in the domains covered by the SEE 2020 Strategy, with all of the main regional players dealing with the sectors outlined above operating under a uniform framework of SEE 2020.
- Monitoring framework that will generate periodic (annual) reviews of regional activities in the SEE 2020 domains, providing RCC participants with analysis of quantitative and qualitative indicators and clear recommendations for action.
- Strengthened capacities of regional partners with adequate governance structures to ensure full participation of national administrations and transposition of regional policy deliberations into national action plans and vice versa, providing for a high level of synchronicity between national and regional level.

In addition to these horizontal achievements expected as a result of the RCC's Strategy and Work Programme presented here, an exhaustive list of the results expected in each of the sectors is included in the Annex I: Detailed Action Plan.

## **2.2 JHA AND SECURITY COOPERATION – STABILITY AND RULE OF LAW**

### **2.2.1 Overview and achievements**

Since its establishment in 2008, the RCC has had an important role in consolidating stability and promoting rule of law in the SEE. Its main operating tool was regional cooperation through wide networking and consultation process. Moreover, the RCC undertook an in-depth analysis of existing mechanisms of cooperation. It actively participated in regional defense, security and JHA cooperation activities contributing to the process of streamlining and had intensive consultations with national institutions and international organizations at political and expert level. The RCC encouraged regional initiatives (RIs) to carry out internal strategic reviews in order to evaluate their added-value in these sectors, looking into their contribution to the overall security cooperation process within SEE. Through a clearly defined mapping of RIs and their activities, RCC identified gaps, overlapping and duplication of actions and supported establishment of operational links between the different cooperation initiatives. As a result several RIs established cooperation and joint efforts in the implementation of their activities. Further efforts are required bearing in mind the different status of SEE countries regarding their EU or NATO membership.

Regional cooperation in the JHA area registered considerable improvements, despite problems generated by crime phenomenon that has persisted and even aggravated internationally. In addressing main issues in the JHA priority area the RCC set up a comprehensive joint regional platform for cooperation - Regional Strategic Document (RSD) on JHA 2011-2013, which was prepared, adopted and implemented in cooperation with other partners from inside and outside the region. In the course of its preparation, state administrations, regional initiatives and international organizations identified as the main regional priorities: the fight against trans-border organized crime; the fight against corruption; migration and asylum, and, initiation of cooperation in the area of fundamental rights and

civil matters. These choices triggered necessary actions which significantly influenced the state of regional cooperation. Following the endorsement of the RSD on JHA at the SEECP meeting of the ministers in Budva in March 2011, the RCC through the newly established high level Steering Group on Regional Strategic Document (SGSR) has developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism (M&EM) to assess regional cooperation in the JHA area.

The RCC will focus on regular usage of the Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism (M&EM) and its results in order to follow regional developments in the JHA areas of particular interest (fight against organized crime; fight against corruption; migration, asylum and refugees; police and law enforcement cooperation and judicial cooperation). These areas are strongly connected with regional priorities, in particular those related to governance for growth and inclusive growth pillars of the SEE 2020.

Synergy in security cooperation has evolved through the positioning the SEECP Summit at the top level of the cooperation mechanism, followed by Defense Ministerial (in the SEECP/SEDM format) which formulates the strategic framework of regional cooperation in the Security area. Meetings of the Defence Policy Directors (DPD) in the RCC SEE participants format, as the most inclusive, will finalize the process of distribution of resources and activities in the security cooperation area among different RIs.

By analyzing regional security cooperation, the RCC identified gaps and initiated development of the SEE Military Intelligence Chiefs (SEEMIC) and SEE National Security Authorities (SEENSA) forums, as well as an NGOs' (working in the security domain) Regional Registry, in order to fill them. The RCC further enhanced and expanded involvement of NATO and EU as active partners in SEE regional security cooperation. Both are firmly committed, through their relevant structures, to SEEMIC and SEENSA initiatives.

The RCC initiated and participated in the establishment of the informal network of Heads of Consular Departments of SEECP states. Meetings of the network enabled discussion on illegal migration, consular representation in third countries, cooperation in suppression of "asylum shopping", etc. As a result of these meetings, several bilateral agreements were signed in the field of representation in third countries.

The RCC established and facilitated the work of the Expert Group on Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters which drafted a regional document similar to the Lugano convention on jurisdiction and mutual recognition and enforcement of judgement on civil and commercial matters. It also assisted establishment and facilitated work of the Expert Group on Cooperation in Criminal Matters to draft documents with long-term impact for regional cooperation. Negotiations are under way to prepare documents which will be the basis for a gradual passage from Mutual Legal Assistance to Mutual Recognition and Direct Judicial Cooperation between national courts. The signing of series of bilateral agreements between Western Balkan countries on mutual extradition of their own nationals was one of the main developments in that area.

In the area of anti-corruption the RCC supported Regional Anti-corruption Initiative (RAI) through funding of diverse anti-corruption activities and establishment of the regional Integrity Expert Network (IEN). This serves as a network of integrity institutions responsible for conflict of interest prevention, and, assets declaration. Also, anti-corruption efforts facilitated a meeting of the Southeast Europe Law Schools (SEELS) with Southeast Europe Justice Training Network. It allows harmonization of anti-corruption curricula of all national judicial training academies with curricula of law faculties in the region, further contributing to the establishment of framework for integrated anticorruption legal education in SEE.

Long standing regional cooperation in disaster preparedness and prevention in SEE, has not been developed effectively enough and a unified regional approach to disasters risk reduction (DRR) is still to be achieved.

### 2.2.2 Regional priorities

From the above analysis and considering the continuous nature of the issues to be addressed in the field of JHA and security, RCC will focus on the following core regional priorities. These are also intended to lay the foundation for further work beyond 2016.

- Greater coordination of regional cooperation in fighting organised crime through development of common policy framework, joint strategic planning and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Existing initiatives as PCC-SEE, SEPICA, SELEC and SEEPAG (Western Balkans Prosecutor Network) together with national administrations have a key role to take in.
- Support activities in the area of Migration, Asylum and Refugees. Through activities addressing the increased number of illegal migrants and asylum seekers transiting the SEE region in an attempt to reach EU, greater regional cooperation is needed, exchange of information among affected countries, exchange of best practices and common response addressing the EU as well as development of migration schemes with the EU. Special attention should be given to the vulnerable groups and victims of trafficking of human beings.
- Improve efficiency of regional dialogue and cooperation mechanisms on security and defence issues, through the development of common strategic planning and increased coordination with and among RIs. The RCC will work towards building up common ground and reflecting it back into national priorities through enhanced participation of national institutions of SEE countries in the activities of the RIs. This will be attained through regular consultations with national security institutions represented in the different RIs.
- Contribute to enhanced political support to security cooperation and the cross-sectoral dimension through:
  - (i) Establishing multilateral consultations forums such as Heads of the Specialized Parliamentary Committees, and, security and defense advisors to the Presidents/Prime-Ministers. These formats will provide a platform for informal discussions and exchange of good practices for the benefit of security cooperation in SEE;
  - (ii) Initiating a regional approach to the security information flow among security RIs and relevant national institutions enabling regional exchange of information and facilitating different RIs to establish operational links between and among them in order to execute and synchronize the exchange of information and analyses for better strategic planning and program implementation;
  - (iii) Closely monitoring and analyzing security aspects of other priority areas of the RCC. According to the relevance of different sectors for human security, concrete priorities and modalities of action will be developed.

### 2.2.3 RCC Work Programme

- a. ***Greater coordination of regional cooperation in fighting organised crime.***
  - (i) Coordinate drafting and adoption of a Regional Strategy and Action Plan on Justice and Home Affairs beyond 2013. In line with experience gained in the previous period as well as results in the field of regional cooperation the RCC will focus its efforts to further improve coherence between policy areas and those implemented by regional and international players active in the field notably through organization of Annual Coordination Meetings.
  - (ii) Monitor regional cooperation through M&EM in JHA area - Meetings of the Steering Group will be periodically organized in order to assess activities of the M&EM as well as draft Cooperation Report.
- b. ***Support activities in the area of Migration, Asylum and Refugees enhancing regional cooperation on migration management.*** To be actively involved in future activities initiated by the RCC participants or EU member states to address specific migration-related issues such



as information-gathering and sharing, asylum, return of illegal migrants to the countries of origin, respecting the non-refoulement principle or development of migration schemes. Similarly, the RCC will continue to provide support to MARRI, IOM and ICMPPD, notably in organising activities on issues pertaining to migration.

**c. *Development of effective regional mechanisms in the security area.***

(i) Through the SEENSA Regional cooperation platform with the full support and guidance of the EU and NATO modalities of the regional exchange of classified information will be sought. SEENSA thematic working groups addressing specific issues of classified information exchange in different sectors will invite and if needed involve in their work institutions and representatives of other economic and social areas relevant for their work.

(ii) The SEEMIC will be further supported and developed as unique forum of the Heads of Military Intelligence in SEE. SEEMIC will build operational links with other RIs developing analytical outputs for the benefit of other regional cooperation mechanisms. In close cooperation with the MI of EEAS and support of the MI Division of NATO, further closer link with the forums of the MI Agencies of Member States will be sought.

(iii) The RCC will encourage RIs to expand and deepen cooperation in SEE on disaster risk reduction, building better efficiency and regional approach. Building the capacity of DPPI Secretariat will be aimed as DPPI is the only regionally owned Initiative in the sector.

**d. *Encourage the cross-sectoral dimension in addressing security challenges in SEE.***

(i) Further develop the Defense Procurement (DPrP) cooperation through a forum which will be developed in close cooperation with NATO and SEDM's project "Building Integrity". This forum will allow MoD DPrD to exchange information on national needs for procurement of military equipment and identify possibilities of a regional approach to procurement. Supporting with practical measures of SEDM's project "Building Integrity" will be an important aim of the DPrD initiative.

(ii) Development of the forum of the DPD is an integral part of the top-down regional decision making structure in SEE regional security cooperation. DPD forum can be developed based on the expansion of the existing format of SEEC – Western Balkan Forum for Security Cooperation which brings together DPD of 7 RCC participants from SEE.

(iii) Enhance efforts in initiating cooperation among the Internal Intelligence institutions (SEECIC). The SEECIC forum is to be developed in close cooperation with appropriate institutions of EU Member States and according to the same pattern as SEEMIC and SEENSA. This will bring together the Heads and experts from the National Internal Intelligence Institutions to a regional format, which will create a cooperation platform allowing identification of common challenges and using regional responses in addressing them.

(iv) Two additional fora will be initiated: first, of the heads of parliamentary committees in charge of defense and security and second, security and defense advisors to presidents/prime-ministers. This format will provide informal regional platforms for exchange of views on the possibility to further expand and deepen security cooperation in SEE. These fora will be in position to develop proposals for expanding political support to regional security cooperation.

## **2.3 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES – EXTENDING PARTICIPATION, WIDENING PARTNERSHIPS**

### **2.3.1 Overview and achievements**

Cross-cutting issues have been linked to all RCC priority areas of cooperation. RCC aims to achieve wide participation in identifying regional priorities and performing related activities and to establish partnership with different target groups beyond its core intergovernmental structure in order to achieve wide support in executing its mission. Focused in finding modalities and identifying concrete

activities for strengthening cooperation with highly relevant target groups like parliaments, media, civil society and gender organizations in the region, the efforts of RCC in this area are recognized and fully supported by all RCC participants.

With its experience, analytical capacities and expertise, the RCC is well placed to deliver more realistic and result oriented approaches, to elaborate more measurable and specific results, directed at strengthening cooperation with these target groups and increasing capacity primarily of the main legislative bodies in the region, but also media, CSO and gender networks.

The need for **parliamentary exchanges** in terms of promoting and sharing best practice and experience has become an important aspect of regional cooperation. It provides possibilities for Parliaments to learn from each other, from the European Parliament, and from EU Member States, thus providing response to questions concerning the legal content of EU integration.

Parliamentary cooperation has been driven primarily by the legislative requirements related to the EU *acquis* adoption. For Western Balkans parliaments, preparations for EU membership present particular challenge, as a wide set of EU legislation has to be transposed into national legislation in a relatively short time.

The parliamentary dimension of SEECP has become increasingly relevant, showing its strong political potential for reconciliation and good neighbourly relations, as well as deepening people-to-people relations and understanding. It has also been useful in promoting and sharing best practice and experience in the context of common efforts for harmonization and alignment of legislation with the EU *acquis*.

The economic crisis that has hit SEE has made the **freedom of expression** issues even more complex, with political interference and economic pressures hindering the development of media independence. Deepening of a regional dialogue between the state actors and the media community is the niche the RCC considers of a paramount importance for strengthening the freedom of expression in SEE.

Through facilitating networking (European Association of Public Service Media in SEE) and capacity building (Academy on Media Law) of media professionals in SEE the RCC has already contributed to the improvement of media cooperation, laying ground for their greater independence. Establishing a closer link between the freedom of the media and EU accession criteria could serve as an additional impetus in achieving higher level of independence and professionalization, as well as more prominent role of media in the region. The RCC is ready to contribute to these developments in an even more strategic and targeted manner linking activities in media field with SEE 2020 goals to the benefit of societies in the region and their faster integration into the EU.

RCC will continue to coordinate and support the activities related to the **mobilization and utilization of gender capacities** in the overall economic growth, through coordination of a project “Women Entrepreneurship – A Job Creation Engine in South East Europe”. The Project is focused on systematic actions to harmonize women entrepreneurship policies in accordance with the EU Small Business Act principles, enhance capacities of women entrepreneurs’ networks and associations, promote policy dialogue, propose the improvements in policy making and planning among all stakeholders involved: public, private and civil sector. This three-year-lasting project, commenced in April 2012, valuing 2,2 million EUR covers nine Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) members from SEE: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo\*, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Financially supported by the Kingdom of Sweden, the Project is carried out under coordination of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and execution by two implementing partners: Gender Task Force (GTF) and the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL).

The RCC will coordinate its activities with the **civil society** regional networks. The selected topics will follow the identified priorities of the SWP 2014-2020, as well as those which address gaps recognized

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

by the civil society and RCC. Regular consultation with the civil society in sharing experience and achieving sustainability in targeted areas of interest for the enlargement process and the democratisation in the region will continue. The ability to engage civil society organizations in various concrete aspects of developing and implementing SEE 2020 Strategy further strengthens RCC's role as the pre-eminent horizontal regional cooperation platform.

### 2.3.2 Regional priorities

Based on the achievements of the previous Strategy, taking into account the need to maintain the continuity of actions, enriching them with new elements, the RCC has identified the following priorities aiming at strengthening parliamentary cooperation, media, gender mainstreaming and civil society development and improving coordination and interaction with other regional priorities:

- Strengthening parliamentary dimension of the SEECP. This priority reflects a higher level of regional responsibility, expressed through the proposal for the establishment of a *SEE Parliamentary Assembly*. This major development is a clear indication of the new political approach in the region and the RCC will provide substantial contribution in fostering cooperation among the parliaments with positive impacts to the overall regional political interactions. It will also include other new developments like assisting cooperation between Independent Regulatory Bodies in SEECP countries.
- Supporting parliamentary activities related to the EU acquis and SEE 2020. In supporting the Cetinje Parliamentary Forum (CPF), and the Conference of the European Integration Parliamentary Committees of States participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process (Western Balkans COSAP), the RCC will further take part in capacity-building programme for Western Balkans parliaments on activities related to the EU *acquis*, targeting both parliamentarians and staff. The creation of a Secretariat for the CPF is also part of the project. Increasing involvement of national parliaments in SEE 2020 related topics will have certainly a strong impact and will bring new elements to strengthen the SEE parliamentary cooperation, especially in expanding the awareness of the legislative bodies on the set national and regional objectives.
- Mainstreaming gender issues into regional actions by integrating gender considerations into the overall work of regional institutions and structures in SEE.
- Strengthening regional know-how and exchange on legislative framework for freedom of expression and its implementation, to solidify the foundation for free media and raise awareness of their importance in society.
- Supporting regional efforts to safeguard independence and sustainability of public service media in SEE, as providers of essential services to citizens. Acting as a facilitator, bringing together different actors in the region; provide policy advice and expert assistance; streamline or support activities which deepen dialogue among state and media actors; to impact a societal change towards a more open, stable and transparent environment in SEE, in line with good governance aspects of SEE 2020.
- Supporting increased involvement of civil society in regional activities: The ability to engage the civil society organizations in various concrete aspects of developing and implementing SEE 2020 Strategy further strengthens RCC's role as the pre-eminent horizontal regional cooperation platform. The RCC would define a framework for holding regular annual events with civil society representatives.

### 2.3.3 RCC Work Programme

To deliver on the above noted priorities, RCC intends to implement the following actions in the area of cross-cutting issues:

- a. *Assisting SEECP in developing parliamentary dimension of its work by:*

(i) contributing to the preparation of the Meetings of SEECP Speakers' of Parliament including drafting documents related to the parliamentary overarching role in line with the RCC priority areas;

(ii) assisting the network of national coordinators at the level of Members of Parliament and supporting and monitoring the implementation of the relevant decisions, especially concerning the establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly (SEECP PA);

(iii) initiating the exchange of experiences and good practices of Independent Regulatory Bodies, particularly those dealing with human rights, rights of minorities, antidiscrimination and prevention of corruption, taking into account the variety and modalities of their functioning.

**b. *Supporting parliamentary activities related to the EU acquis and SEE 2020.***

(i) Provide political and technical support to the institutionalization of the Cetinje Parliamentary Forum and setting up of its Secretariat. Support the implementation of the project aiming the transformation of CPF into a focal point for enhanced coordination of parliamentary activities related to the EU *acquis* in the Western Balkans, with a special stress on sharing relevant experiences in the law approximation process.

(ii) RCC will support promotion and strengthen the cooperation between the Committees of National Parliaments dealing with European Affairs, taking into consideration the role and COSAP activities related to the EU enlargement process.

(iii) Considering the cross-cutting nature of parliamentary cooperation, all RCC sectors will be involved in stimulating a more effective engagement of the Western Balkans parliaments in archiving the strategic targets of SEE 2020.

**c. *Finalize the implementation and ensure sustainability of outcomes from the “Women Entrepreneurship – A Job Creation Engine in South East Europe” project.***

During the next strategy cycle, RCC will coordinate and support the activities of two regional organizations implementing the “Women Entrepreneurship – A Job Creation Engine in South East Europe” project. RCC as the main coordinator of the project will ensure that the project has a lasting impact both in terms of harmonizing women entrepreneurship policies in accordance with the EU Small Business Act principles, as well as in enhanced capacities of women entrepreneurs’ networks and associations.

**d. *Strengthening regional know-how and exchange on legislative framework for freedom of expression and its implementation; Supporting regional efforts to safeguard independence and sustainability of public service media in SEE,***

(i) Support Academy on Media Law in South East Europe, its results and recommendations.

(ii) Facilitate update and dissemination of pocketbook on freedom of expression in SEE.

(iii) Support creation of a regional database on media regulation.

(iv) Work with the European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe, EBU, EU, OSCE and other relevant regional and international actors on enabling the democratic role of public service media in SEE.

(v) Support knowledge transfer in SEE between journalists and media professionals on one side and relevant institutions on the other.

## **2.4 GENERAL HORIZONTAL FUNCTIONS OF THE RCC**

The implementation of the RCC SWP 2011-2013 and the results achieved positioned the RCC at the center of regional cooperation efforts. Concentrating RCC’s activities on a carefully selected and prioritized set of tangible and result-oriented activities, while building closer relationships with national institutions and regional structures, has proved to be a cornerstone of a successful regional

cooperation strategy. Going beyond specific sectoral areas of its involvement in regional cooperation, RCC will continue to perform its general/horizontal functions.

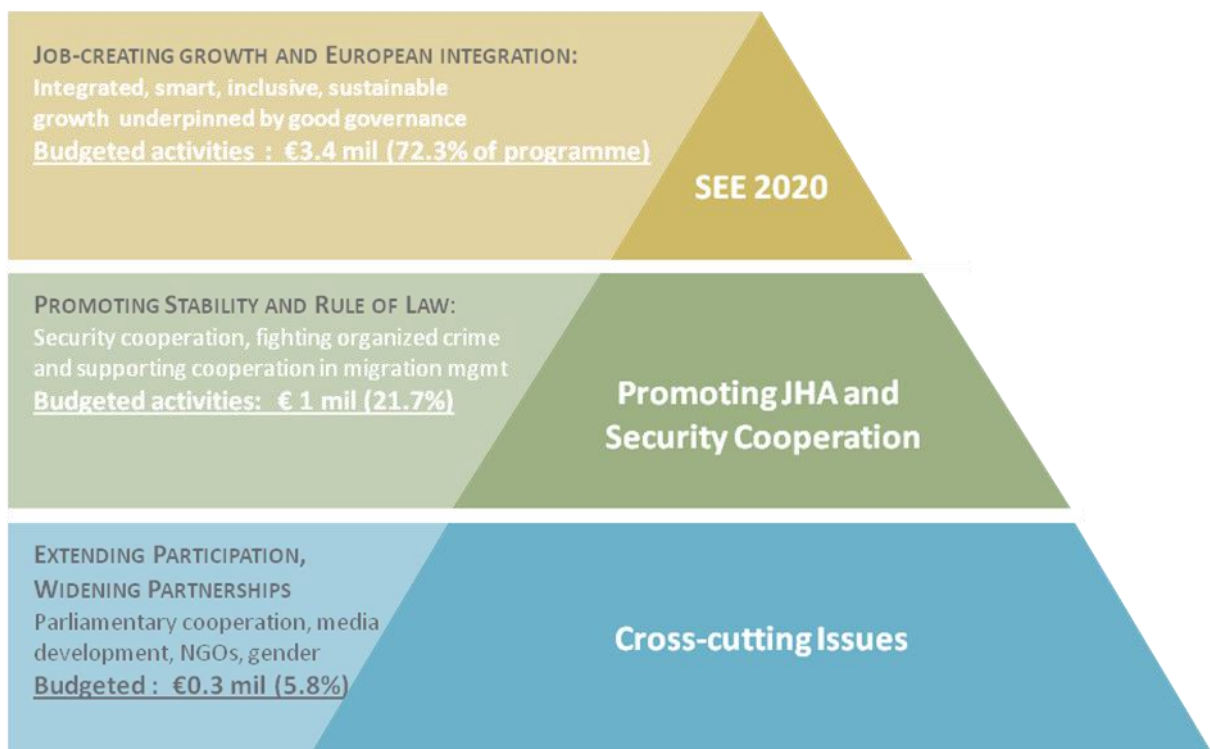
- Assisting the SEECP: The relationship between RCC and SEECP is essential in promoting regional cooperation, particularly given their specific role which is firmly embedded in the SEECP Charter on Good Neighbourly Relations, Stability, Security and Cooperation in SEE and the statutory documents of the RCC. The synergy between the SEECP and the RCC will continue to progress, in particular through regular Coordination meetings between the SEECP Troika (consisting of the former, current and upcoming country holding the C-i-O of the SEECP), the RCC Secretariat and representatives of the European Union (EU). Coordination meetings, co-chaired by the RCC Secretary General and the SEECP C-i-O, will continue to be convened with the purpose of discussing and reviewing developments in SEE, harmonizing the priorities of the country holding the C-i-O of the SEECP with the RCC SWP and exchanging views on other topics of importance for the regional cooperation in SEE. The RCC will continue to provide secretarial and expert assistance to the SEECP C-i-O in preparation and implementation of decisions of the SEECP Summits and/or Ministerial meetings.
- Monitoring and evaluation of regional activities: The RCC will increase its role in monitoring and reporting on regional activities in SEE. To that end, it will seek to be well-informed on ongoing and planned regional activities by participating, as appropriate, in meetings and events, maintaining contacts, exchanging information and, where relevant, setting up working arrangements with regional initiatives and organisations, including international ones active in the region. The SEE 2020 governance system, along with the monitoring framework, will ensure that regional activities are monitored, with a clear mandate and pre-defined set of indicators agreed with the regional and national partners. Based on its monitoring role the RCC Secretariat, would, if deemed necessary, contribute to the preparation of the EC progress reports and Enlargement Strategy.
- Exerting strategic leadership in regional cooperation: The RCC is well placed to exert much needed leadership in promoting regional cooperation in SEE, in close cooperation with other stakeholders. The RCC's added value lies in its capacity to provide expertise with a regional perspective in the context of EU integration process. The RCC will identify needs and complementarities related to regional cooperation activities, capitalize on the interdependence/interconnectivity of priority areas in facilitating new activities and assisting regional initiatives in filling gaps and reducing redundancies and overlap. The RCC will, in close cooperation with the SEECP and other relevant stakeholders, continue the process of streamlining regional taskforces and initiatives, with the aim of achieving enhanced effectiveness, synergy and coherence. It will seek to facilitate appropriate solutions to issues in regional cooperation arising from the different status of the RCC members from SEE with respect to the EU integration. The RCC will focus on a number of selected actions identified together with its stakeholders.
- Providing a regional perspective in donor assistance: The RCC will continue to contribute to the programming of IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme (IPA MB). The SEE 2020 evolved as a comprehensive development strategy for the region, with underlying sector priorities corresponding largely to the key challenges facing the region. It provides a useful framework to connect the political reform agenda and countries' sector strategies relevant for EU membership with IPA II priorities. The aim is to ensure that current IPA and incoming IPA II priorities correspond to regional priorities, to focus attention on the need for beneficiaries to cooperate among themselves and liaise with other key stakeholders and the donor community. The RCC will play a similar role, as appropriate, regarding the assistance to the region provided by other donors. The RCC as an active participant in the donor coordination process within the International Financial Institutions Advisory Group (IFI AG) and the Steering Committee of the Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF) will contribute to better define regional cooperation priorities. The SEE 2020 framework provides clear advantages for the RCC's external partners. Whether it is the EU or other donors, the SEE 2020 offers a

transparent platform for identifying areas of greatest need, as well as those of common interest, thus giving a clear regional perspective to donor assistance. The RCC will also increase its role in monitoring whether IPA and other donor funding reflect regional cooperation priorities.

- ***Representing the region:*** The RCC will be further engaged in representing the region at international fora, multilateral and bilateral meetings thus promoting the region’s place on the international arena and its European and Euro-Atlantic perspectives. Consultations will continue with high-level representatives of the SEECP participating states, other RCC participants from SEE and outside the region, EU institutions, and international and regional organisations active in SEE as well as with other relevant players involved in support of the region’s development and realization of its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. This mechanism of consultations will ensure that regional priorities reflect the needs and capacities of the RCC participants from SEE.

RCC will continue to develop cooperative links with various partners in order to identify and initiate activities in priority areas as appropriate, leaving project implementation to specialized implementing agencies. When contributing to setting up new initiatives and networks, it will aim to ensure their administrative and financial self-sustainability. This does not exclude, in a limited number of cases, a transitory role for the RCC in managing and supporting these new initiatives.

<sup>1</sup> **Structure of the RCC Strategy and Work Programme 2014-16 and Indicative Budgetary Implications**



**ANNEX I - DETAILED WORK PROGRAMME: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**





**I. South East Europe 2020 Strategy – Job Creating Growth and EU Integration**

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>INTEGRATED GROWTH</b>				
<p><b>1. Trade and investment integration</b></p>	<p>Establish a cooperation structure within the SEE Investment Committee on investment policy and promotion and develop a clear roadmap on horizontal and sectoral measures for raising the investment profile of SEE under the SEE 2020 framework.</p> <p>Help identify complementarities between the economic systems where FDI would reinforce integration and provide links to European/global value chains.</p> <p>Move investment promotion activities towards regionally agreed objectives and industries.</p> <p>Coordinate trade and investment related activities with other actions under SEE2020</p> <p>Promote other possibilities of economic integration, such as development of regional capital markets.</p> <p>Provide Secretarial functions to the SEEIC and organize (i) regular Ministerial meetings, (ii) bi-annual executive level meetings and (iii) regular and ad-hoc technical-level structures to drive the reform process.</p>	<p>Obtained mandate for SEEIC structures and national stakeholders to engage in the area of investment policy coordination and investment promotion by end of 2014</p> <p>Established regional mechanisms for investment promotion and attraction by 2015</p> <p>Targeted regional approaches in FDI promotion policies that support the movement of region’s economies towards export-oriented and higher value added products and services by 2016.</p> <p>Main features of a regional capital markets platform identified and agreed by all stakeholders by 2016.</p>	<p>Line Ministries and other institutions in charge of economy, investment and finance; Securities regulators; Securities market participants; CEFTA; SEEIC; OECD; The World Bank; EC;</p>	<p>2014</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>SMART GROWTH</b>				
<b>2. Support for the regional cooperation in doctoral studies</b>	Facilitate regional cooperation among universities regarding: mobility of doctoral candidates; development of infrastructure for mutual recognition of awarded doctoral degrees; exchange of post-doctoral researchers; strengthening of joint supervision of doctoral candidates; setting of the framework for exchange of evaluation programs and experts; participation in collaborative research grants in order to increase institutional capacities both in research expertise and infrastructure, etc.	<p>Enhanced convergence with European Higher Education Policy including Bologna reforms;</p> <p>Increased mobility of doctoral candidates and post-doctoral researchers in the region;</p> <p>Regulations in the related area on the country level improved;</p> <p>Joint commission for supervision of doctoral candidates established;</p> <p>Pilot joint doctoral programs launched;</p>	Universities from the region; Ministries of Education and Science of WB; Ministries of Education and Science and Universities from EU Member States; EC; WUS Austria	<p>Constituting phase: 2013</p> <p>Operational period: January 2014-December 2016</p>
<b>3. Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation in Higher Education.</b>	Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation in Higher Education is an embryo of the future Regional Higher Education Area, sustaining results of STREW Tempus project as a mature phase of Novi Sad Initiative, under the umbrella of Regional Cooperation Council. Regional Platform has aboard Higher education institutions and authorities from seven countries from the region. It aims to: foster a Regional 'collective voice' in higher education that resonates regionally, nationally and internationally; encourage strategic debate in the region on higher education; share good practice in higher education structural reform; develop benchmarking for higher education quality issues; promote regional cooperation and strategic partnerships in higher education.	<p>Regional Roadmap in higher education reform launched and promoted;</p> <p>Professionalization of public governance and management encouraged.</p> <p>High standards of quality in higher education programs and the comparability of the standards of student achievements in the region constantly promoted;</p> <p>Mobility of students, academics, higher education experts, and senior administrative staff and policy makers within the region enhanced.</p> <p>Co-operation boosted, and the capability of higher education institutions to respond to national expectations and to compete successfully in the international arena enhanced, in line with EU modernization agenda.</p>	Universities from the region; Ministries of Education and Science of SEE; Ministries of Education and Science and Universities from EU Member States; EC.	<p>Constituting phase: 2013</p> <p>Operational period: January 2014-December 2016</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>4. Teaching modern Southeast Europe history – Alternative Educational Material</b>	Cooperate with CDRSEE’s JHP II to provide alternative, multi-perspective history-teaching materials that promote reconciliation and democracy in student population; provides trainings and materials for teaching history on post-World War II and 1990s eras ;organises teacher-training workshops and encourage cooperation across the region among teachers and their associations, ministries of education and civil society organisations.	<p>Modern learning materials advocating a multi-perspective approach are available and accessible to Balkan societies;</p> <p>Strengthened capacities of competent teachers as facilitators of new teaching methodologies;</p> <p>Academia, students, parents, ministries, policy makers, young researchers, CSOs, and other segments of society have a raised awareness of the benefits of reformed education.</p>	CDRSEE; JHP; Ministries of Education; Teacher organisations.	Constituting phase: 2013  Operational period: January 2014- December 2017
<b>5. Establishment of the Regional Research Platform</b>	Assist realization of envisaged follow up activities to the Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation through: establishment of Research Excellence Fund, aiming to strengthen the level of research and its quality in key scientific domains and connecting local scientists with the large Diaspora; development of Centres of Excellence Program, focusing on research areas with comparative regional advantage to enable regional smart specialization; initiating of regional technology transfer facility and innovation finance facility; creation of transparent and efficient regional mechanism under the auspices of the RCC, which will supervise and govern the implementation of the Regional Strategy and its action plan. This body would also coordinate different donor activities in the region, improving governance and effectiveness in the field of research and innovation.	<p>Transparent and efficient regional mechanism which will coordinate implementation of the RSRDI created;</p> <p>Innovative capacities of researchers and scientists of the Western Balkans strengthened;</p> <p>Improved administrative capacities for cooperation in the area of Research and Development;</p> <p>Established cooperation mechanisms among R&amp;D, higher education and business sectors;</p> <p>Integration of WB region in ERA.</p>	Ministries of Education and Science of the Western Balkans; Research Institutes from the region; Universities from the SEE; Business community from the region; EC; World Bank; Steering Platform for Research for the WB; WBC.INCO-NET.	Operational period: January 2014 – December 2016

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>6. Continuation of Ljubljana Process</b></p>	<p>Continuation of this project will multiply achieved benefits of the previous phase of the project and focus on concrete, tangible results in rehabilitation of cultural heritage monuments in the region;</p> <p>Assist preparation of necessary documentation for specific projects: feasibility studies, business plans and technical assessments, leading to public-private investments for rehabilitation projects;</p> <p>Organise professional training courses, workshops, seminars, study visits, school programmes;</p> <p>Promote cultural diversity and dissemination activities.</p>	<p>RCC Task Force on Culture and Society implementing efficiently Ljubljana Process planned activities;</p> <p>Documentation for number of rehabilitation projects from PILs fully completed;</p> <p>Flagship projects completed;</p> <p>Increased public awareness and visibility of actions focusing on social and economic impact of rehabilitation projects and the role of heritage in sustainable development strategies.</p>	<p>RCC Task Force on Culture and Society; Ministries of Culture of WB; EC; CoE; Civil societies and NGOs</p>	<p>Operational period: April 2014 - April 2017</p>
<p><b>7. Establishment of the SEE Museums Network</b></p>	<p>Cross-border cooperation between cultural institutions and operators fostered in: (i) Exchange of efficient management models among museums through organised trainings; (ii) Expert staff exchange; (iii) Exhibition and museums artefacts exchange; (iv) Exchange of information on the cultural heritage status and organisation of advisory services and workshops on prevention of illicit trafficking of cultural goods; (iv) Encouraging the experience exchange in the application of ICT; (v) Organisation of exhibitions and cultural activities of a different nature; (vi) Development of visitor education programmes for various target groups.</p>	<p>Transparent and efficient regional mechanism for museums cooperation established;</p> <p>Management of the museums modernised/improved;</p> <p>Museums staff trained in accordance with multidisciplinary education and research projects;</p> <p>Joint museums artefacts exhibitions organised;</p> <p>Level of cultural heritage protection raised;</p> <p>Implementation of ICT and museum documentation digitalisation encouraged;</p> <p>Cultural heritage presentations enhanced;</p> <p>Trainings in the field of museum education organized, with emphases on the young people.</p>	<p>RCC Task Force on Culture and Society; Museums in SEE; Ministries of Culture of SEE; EC; ICOM; CoE; Civil societies and NGOs</p>	<p>Operational period: January 2014 - December 2016</p>
<p><b>8. Support to Culture and</b></p>	<p>Coordinate activities towards improvement of the conditions for assisting the film industry in</p>	<p>Established regional mechanisms for operating Regional Film Fund, including political decision-making body, technical body of</p>	<p>Regional Film Fund; EC;</p>	<p>Constituting phase: 2013</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>Creative Industries</b>	SEE by complementing available funds on national and European level (EURIMAGES), with an aim to strengthen cross-border market for audio-visual works in SEE. The aim is also to channel public funding into independent audio-visual projects from the region with a view to create multiplier effect of generating further investment, thus producing the potential for larger returns from this growing market, strengthening the companies and achieving sustainability for the sector.	<p>professionals and permanent secretariat;</p> <p>Enhanced projects and partnerships in film industry;</p> <p>Encouraged active cooperation between film policy bodies, public broadcasters, production and distribution companies in the region;</p> <p>Increased production value of the films through innovative expert evaluation of the film projects;</p> <p>Increased potential for larger returns from this growing market, strengthening the companies and achieving sustainability for the audiovisual sector;</p> <p>Strengthened educational component by close collaboration with Universities;</p> <p>Close cooperation with broadcasters and new media platforms.</p>	Council of Europe; Ministries of Culture; Public Broadcasting Companies/European Association of Public Service Media in SEE; EURIMAGES; NORDISK FILM & TV FOND; Ministries of Education; Ministries of Tourism Private Sector;	Operational period: January 2014- December 2016
<b>SUSTAINABLE GROWTH</b>				
<b>9. Contribute to increased use of renewable energy, improved energy efficiency and reduced GHG emissions in the region</b>	<p>with ECS to derive targets relevant for SEE 2020 based on Energy Community achievements and plan activities necessary for completing SEE 2020 relating to EU 20-20-20 requirements which are not covered under Energy Community framework cooperating closely with ECS, REC, ECRAN, relevant national and regional authorities.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Liaise with ECS to identify gaps where RCC could contribute. Possible areas: co-organising and hosting workshops and discussions;</p>	<p>Targets set under the EnC Energy Efficiency TF and EnC Renewable Energy TF as well as objectives of Energy Strategy of the Energy Community integrated into the updated SEE 2020 strategy, enabling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integration of the energy dimension into the wider context of economic growth,</li> <li>- Strengthening the role of the EnC in addressing GHG emissions reduction taking into account that energy sector is major contributor to the GHG emissions,</li> <li>- Enhancing links between the EnC and local authorities and civil society.</li> </ul> <p>Region better prepared for aligning to EU 20-20-20 and EU 2050 goals.</p> <p>Improved regional cooperation in areas not or insufficiently covered by ECS, including possibly strengthened role and capacity of regional and local authorities and civil society as</p>	ECS, REC ECRAN Line ministries and other institutions, EC, CSOs, Associations of local authorities, NALAS, Parliaments from SEE, IFIs, Donor Community	<p>Defined role of ECS, REC, RCC and other partners under resource efficiency dimension of the SEE 2020 sustainable growth pillar; existing targets integrated into SEE 2020; complement the SEE 2020 to EU 20-20-20 requirements not covered under EnC started in 2013; follow up activities.</p> <p>Identifying additional activities</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	<p>facilitate discussions with regional and local authorities, experts, CSOs and parliamentarians; promoting good practices, integrated approach and regional approach.</p> <p>Support to further development of the SEDRI initiative and its implementation. Promote replication of successful projects. Facilitate and promote transfer of advanced sustainable energy technologies to the countries from the region.</p> <p>Consider the replication of SEDRI to other infrastructure subsectors (i.e. sustainable urban transportation).</p>	<p>well as increased involvement of parliamentarians in addressing Energy Community issues;</p> <p>Small-scale sustainable energy facilities constructed in interested members from SEE (beneficiaries) providing economic, environmental, energy and social benefits and promoting possibilities for private sector involvement;</p> <p>Raised awareness of policy and decision-makers to support sustainable energy development and speed up decision-making process; awareness of general public on the importance of sustainable energy raised;</p> <p>Replication of successful projects promoted; advanced sustainable energy technologies transferred to the countries from the region;</p> <p>Improved cooperation, exchange of experience and networking and fostered synergy of activities with other IOs and initiatives (EnC, UNECE EE21 Project, NALAS, IENE etc.) as well as with and between beneficiaries;</p> <p>Strengthened "bottom-up" response in view of aligning the region to EU 20-20-20 goals and EU 2050 vision;</p> <p>Replication to other infrastructure subsectors.</p>	<p>CEI; Responsible beneficiaries' line ministries and other institutions including education, research and scientific; CSOs; associations of local authorities; NALAS; media; business; EC; IFIs; Donor Community</p>	<p>for cooperation with the ECS, where necessary 2014 and afterwards.</p> <p>National Stakeholders Consultations and Sector Stakeholders Conference to be held in 2013; Based on the EU funded project outputs, agreement with CEI on scope and continuation of the initiative implementation reached in 2013; SEDRI TF meetings and related implementation activities with RCC support in 2014 and afterwards</p>
<p><b>10. Contribute to the development of sustainable and integrated transport in the region</b></p>	<p>Monitor follow-up activities of the Airspace Study and provide administrative support in its implementation. Facilitate key stakeholders' meetings during the course of the study.</p> <p>Enhance further discussions of the EC with national authorities and experts in particular with regard to more efficient implementation of the Single European Sky in SEE (ISIS II</p>	<p>Improved air services within the region; Increased air traffic flow and air routes in the region; Increased regional cross-border flight connections; Strengthen regional economic and cultural links; Reduced aircraft gas emissions in line with SEE2020</p> <p>Increased regional cooperation in airspace planning and coordination leading towards the implementation of Functional Airspace Block(s) in line with the requirements laid down in the SEE legislation.</p>	<p>EC; ISIS PS; Ministries; Air traffic agencies; Flight operators and related industries; Air navigation service providers and airports; EUROCONTROL;</p>	<p>Stakeholders' consultation meetings to be held during the course of the study; FS to be completed in 2014; follow up activities based on outcomes of FS with RCC administrative</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	<p>programme).</p> <p>Identify and address gaps for more efficient planning, designing and implementation of road transport projects and propose actions to overcome such gaps; promote good practices;</p> <p>Raise public awareness on deficiencies of road infrastructure in the region; Hold discussions with responsible authorities, EC, SEETO and road experts.</p> <p>Mobilise expertise and liaise with relevant authorities in order to address urgent need to reconstruct, rehabilitate and modernize the railway system in SEE, thus providing wide political support to the railway sector. Facilitate discussion with relevant national and regional authorities, organize and participate in relevant meetings, facilitate development of possible regional projects and support legal and institutional railway reforms.</p>	<p>Facilitated implementation of road acquis; More efficient managing of roads; Raised public awareness on environmental impact of road infrastructure; Reduced number of road fatalities and injuries; Improved road users behaviour; Cut in road traffic emissions in line with SEE2020 Facilitated transfer of best practice and experience; More efficient utilisation of available EU funds for road projects; Increased level of accessibility, more sustainable mobility and quality level of services throughout the region.</p> <p>Improved efficiency of railway companies and related infrastructure; Increased competitiveness of rail traffic; Adjustment to conditions of the liberalized European transport market; More targeted use of financial resources; Increased passengers and cargo transport; Strengthen internal communication inside national administrations and with EU and regional structures and railway experts.</p>	<p>EASA; AEA; ACI; NATO</p> <p>Ministries and other relevant institutions, EC, SEETO, ERF, UNECE, IRU, IRF, Experts' Associations, CSOs, Academia, Private sector, Media</p> <p>Line ministries and other institutions, EC, SEETO, World Bank, Experts' Associations, ERA</p>	<p>support in 2015 and onwards</p> <p>Initiate preparatory activities and consultations in 2013; Meetings to take place during 2013-2014 and onwards</p> <p>First meeting in 2013; follow up activities in 2014 and onwards based on willingness of the national authorities and interested stakeholders to accelerate railway reforms and development.</p>
<p><b>11. Strengthen regional environmental and climate change cooperation</b></p>	<p>Liaise with REC, ECRAN, national and regional partners in the framework of Resource Efficiency dimension of SEE 2020 Sustainable Growth pillar in order to develop regional targets and indicators which will link economic growth to priority environmental and climate aspects.</p> <p>Participate in relevant Danube Region Strategy</p>	<p>Integration of the environmental and climate change dimension into wider context of economic growth;</p> <p>Region better prepared for addressing priority environmental and climate issues and integrating these issues into other sectoral policies;</p> <p>Danube Region Strategy fully reflecting regional SEE perspective;</p>	<p>EC, REC, ECRAN, Ministries and other relevant institutions, Danube Commission ICPDR, ISRBC, Danube Cooperation</p>	<p>Preparatory activities and consultations started in 2013; RCC support to Resource Efficiency dimension of the SEE 2020 Sustainable Growth Pillar and Danube</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	<p>meetings, bringing a regional SEE perspective. Ensure the participation of local authorities and civil society. Promote inter-sectoral cooperation and other dimensions of integrated approach. Co-organise and host workshops and discussions to that end.</p> <p>Support awareness raising on the Danube potentials, its role, increasing global challenges with the focus on climate change adaptation (CCA) and social responsibility;</p> <p>Support regional players in organizing meetings and other events and cooperation activities in the area of integrated water resources management (ITWRM).</p>	<p>Increased role and capacity of civil society and local authorities in addressing Danube issues;</p> <p>Strengthened cooperation between sectoral structures and initiatives and other relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>Raised public awareness on the Danube potentials, its role, increasing global challenges and social responsibility;</p> <p>Increased role and capacity of CSOs in addressing CCA, their cooperation and information exchange and facilitated integration of CCA into sectoral policies;</p> <p>Improved regional cooperation in ITWRM by creating prerequisites for private sector involvement in water infrastructure development.</p>	<p>Process, CSOs, Media, Donor Community SECI SEEFCCA GWP-Med IAAI ICPE BFPE SEE Change Net Other IOs</p>	<p>Region Strategy implementation 2014 and afterwards.</p> <p>Workshops and discussions in 2014-2015; meetings and facilitating project proposals preparation afterwards.</p>
<b>INCLUSIVE GROWTH</b>				
<p><b>12. Social Development</b></p>	<p>Promote strengthened cooperation between line ministries and interaction among sector strategies to generate and advance employment outcomes.</p> <p>Coordinate regional activities towards strengthened labour market governance and promote labour mobility in the Western Balkan countries.</p> <p>Sustain regional cooperation towards employment creation in the framework of the 'new skills for new jobs' platform. Promote a regionally cohesive workforce database system to contribute to better research and analysis as well as evidence based policy making..</p>	<p>A regional agenda in the social development area put forward with regionally coordinated actions and timetables for skills upgrading and job creation.</p> <p>Raised awareness of policy makers to work together towards job creation and job creation as a focus of all national policies and regional deliberations.</p> <p>Raised awareness of policy makers on the benefits of social economy development.</p> <p>Strengthened networking and cooperation among social economy actors.</p> <p>An enabling environment for social economy initiatives to start and grow.</p> <p>Clear mandate established for the Social Agenda to engage in these activities with gradual increase of capacity through structured efforts together with external assistance.</p>	<p>Line ministries and other institutions in charge of labour, employment and social policies, education, and economic development.</p> <p>Social partners, researchers and CSOs from the region;</p> <p>EC (DG Employment);</p> <p>The World Bank; ILO;</p>	<p>Identification of priority actions within the 'new skills for new jobs' platform in 2014.</p> <p>Implementation of priority actions under way in 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>Action plan for promoting labour mobility and improving labour market governance agreed with national governments, 2014.</p> <p>Implementation of</p>



ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	<p>Coordinate regional cooperation towards addressing social needs in the framework of the 'social economy' platform.</p> <p>Contribute to raising awareness of both health as investment and economic asset and mutual links between health and other sectors.</p> <p>Provide Secretarial functions to the Social Agenda and organize (i) regular Ministerial meetings, (ii) bi-annual executive level meetings and (iii) regular and ad-hoc technical-level structures to drive the reform process.</p>		ETF; Donor Community.	<p>action plan in 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>A social economy platform established in 2014 and Implementation of priority actions in 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>Actions promoting health equity and health in all policies implemented by the SEE Health Network during 2014-2016.</p>
<b>GOVERNANCE FOR GROWTH</b>				
<p><b>13. Support existing initiatives in the area of fight against corruption</b></p>	<p>Support RAI and Integrity Experts Network (IEN) in assessing regional anticorruption field, identifying gaps and needs of stakeholders and ensuring coordination with other operative bodies/networks.</p> <p>Co-organize periodic meetings of the Directors of National Institutions and Agencies for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime of the SEEC countries.</p>	<p>Improved and extended functioning of RAI and regional Integrity Experts Network, resulting in more regionally coordinated and efficient fight against corruption.</p> <p>Improved functioning of the co-operation between national authorities responsible for combating corruption.</p>	<p>Regional Organisations RCC SEE Participants RAI EC CoE UNODC ,UNDP OECD GIZ SEELS SEEJTN</p>	<p>Annual Meetings of the National Institutions and Agencies for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime of the SEEC countries 2014-2016.</p>
<p><b>14. Improve anti-corruption training through integrated legal education on anti-corruption</b></p>	<p>Support SEE Judicial Training Network (SEEJTN) as a platform for integrated legal education on anti-corruption in the region, based on a common forum of cooperation between RAI and SEELS, in partnership with GIZ.</p>	<p>Improved regional training framework for anti-corruption in legal education in SEE.</p>	<p>Regional Organisations RCC SEE Participants RAI EC, CoE UNODC, UNDP</p>	<p>Permanent activity throughout of the 2014-2016 period.</p> <p>Co-organization of the meetings necessary for establishment and</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
			OECD GIZ SEELS SEEJTN	operationalization of the SEEJTN.
<b>15. Initiate JHA related activities supportive to development of favourable environment to the licit economy</b>	Support strengthening and organize regular work of existing informal networks of experts dealing with highly specialized topics like: Frauds, Cyber crime - Identity thefts, Confiscation and recovery of assets.	Improved functioning of the expert groups which should contribute to establishment of safer environment for the businesses.	RCC SEE Participants Regional Organizations Europol Interpol	Permanent activity

## II. JHA and Security Cooperation – Stability and Rule of Law

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>1. Coordinate drafting and adoption of a Regional Strategy and Action Plan on Justice and Home Affairs beyond 2014.</b>	Organize work of the Steering Group on Regional Strategy: relevant stakeholders involved in the development of the documents for previous policy cycle to prepare a Regional Strategic Document (RSD) on Justice and Home Affairs to direct co-operation and co-ordination in next six years. The strategy and action plan include: - Summary of results obtained through the Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism (M&EM); - List of benchmarks and indicators used for assessment; - Chart of regional actions, initiatives-institutions and programmes; - Mapping of existing technical assistance activities and identifying lessons learned; gaps and overlapping.  Coordinate monitoring and implementation of the RSD.	A sustainable, coherent, transparent and coordinated set of actions stemming from experience in implementation of previous policy cycle and prioritisation of RCC Participants which will provide guidance for: - Monitoring regional progress, - Information flow, - Facilitating cooperation among regional actors - Donors' coordination and - Raising the visibility of regional initiatives.	RCC SEE Participants Regional Organisations International Organisations	2 meetings of the Steering Group for Regional Strategy in 2013;  Ministerial Conference for adoption of the Strategy at the end of 2013/beginning of 2014 (SEECF);  Monitoring and reporting on the Strategy implementation with RCC M&EM and administrative support 2014 – 2020

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>2. Monitor regional cooperation through Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism for regional cooperation in JHA area</b></p>	<p>Organize activities on preparation of data collection and aggregation, draft of the initial report, and expert mission which will draft Regional Cooperation Reports. Organize meeting of the Steering Group which will finalize report(s), adopt it. To organize printing and dissemination of the report.</p>	<p>Reliable online data collection system, with a secure database and a simple user friendly front-end; Analytical products prepared by experts in the area under the coordination and supervision of the RCC, with support from representatives of the Member States and Regional Organizations; Projects, Studies and Researches initiated by the Universities in the SEELS Network and by RCC; Supplementary indicators that can be monitored through the same database; Indicators and database customized for further developments.</p>	<p>RCC SEE Participants Regional Organisations International Organisations</p>	<p>Permanent activity of the RCC</p>
<p><b>3. Organize activities in the field of Roma Civil Registration</b></p>	<p>Organize meetings of the relevant authorities responsible for Roma inclusion in order to address cross-cutting problems: - Roma missing IDs with a special focus on legal and administrative obstacles, - Political rights: Access to elections.</p>	<p>Improved procedures for registration of Roma and issuing of the ID's.</p>	<p>RCC SEE Participants EU Commission</p>	<p>Organization of the first meeting- October November 2014</p>
<p><b>4. Improve regional legal framework for judicial and prosecutorial cooperation in criminal matters</b></p>	<p>Continue work and organization of meetings of the Regional Expert Teams on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal matters. Organise regional meetings of the SEE Ministries of Justice.  Organize regional meetings of the Presidents of Supreme Courts and Chief Public Prosecutors.  Support results of the structure resulting from EU Project "Fight against Organized Crime and Corruption: Strengthening the Prosecutors Network in Southeast Europe"</p>	<p>Balance discrepancy in cooperation between police, prosecutors and judiciary  Progressive and dynamic transition from mutual legal assistance to mutual recognition while taking full account the growing freedom of movement of people, goods and services in the SEE. Improved judiciary and prosecutorial and law enforcement cooperation in fighting organised crime and dangerous forms of criminality.  Provide permanence of the results of the "Fight against Organized Crime and Corruption: Strengthening the Prosecutors Network in Southeast Europe"</p>	<p>Regional Organisations RCC SEE Participants UNODC SELEC SEEPAG PCC-SEE GIZ CILC</p>	<p>Finalize negotiations on Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters with RCC administrative support in 2015. Organize Ministerial meeting for adoption of the negotiated legal tool end of 2015 - beginning of 2016.  Organize regional meetings of the Presidents of Supreme Courts and</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
				Chief Public Prosecutors, proceeding 2014 – 2016 with RCC administrative support.
<p><b>5. Support initiatives aiming at enhancing regional cooperation on migration management (both regular and irregular)</b></p>	<p>Support MARRI, IOM and ICMPD in organizing operational meetings and cooperation activities on legal and illegal migration within the ongoing regional programmes.</p> <p>Promote future activities initiated by the EU or countries of the SEE region to address specific migration-related issues.</p> <p>Co-organize and host conferences, meetings, assessments, and discussions to identify gaps and propose regional responses to overcome those gaps.</p> <p>Planned activities for all actions will include: development of the new Regional Strategy on JHA, monitoring and reporting on Strategy implementation with RCC M&amp;EM and administrative support</p>	<p>Improved and extended regional cooperation on migration management resulting in more regionally coordinated and efficient management of migration issues.</p> <p>Exchange information, share best practices at the regional level as well as propose coordinated actions</p>	<p>MARRI PCC-SEE Secretariat RCC SEE Participants IOM ICMPD GIZ</p>	<p>Initiate in 2013. First meetings in 2014 Proceeding 2014 – 2016 with RCC administrative support</p>
<p><b>6. Facilitate and support the development of effective regional mechanisms in the security area</b></p>	<p>Develop operational connections among regional initiatives (RIs) and structures on intra and inter-sectoral basis. Synergy based on common challenges and goals shared among RIs that seek a common ground and mutual interest in activity outputs. Further develop SEEMIC as a unique forum of security cooperation that expands its regional common analytical outputs for the benefit of other regional cooperation mechanisms. Assist SEE Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) to expand and deepen</p>	<p>Sustainable, integrated and transparent regionally owned cooperation mechanisms between relevant regional initiatives and centers for more integrated regional security cooperation. DPPI connected with SEDM. SEDM involved SEEBRIG in disaster relief operations (DRO). RCC facilitates DPPI sharing of knowledge and experience in the preparation of DRO. SEESAC connected with SEDM. The RCC facilitates close connection between the two initiatives within the implementation of the project ‘Female leaders in Security and Defense’</p>	<p>RCC SEE Members, NATO, EEAS, GS Council of EU, SEDM, SEEC, US-Adriatic Charter, RACVIAC, SEESAC, DPPI</p>	<p>Meetings to take place once or twice a year with the RCC administrative support in 2014-2016.</p> <p>Regular consultations and preparatory meetings with each administration, as well as with the</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	<p>cooperation in SEE on disaster risk reduction.</p> <p>Continue to facilitate and support the development of the SEE Defence Policy and Procurement Directors Forum, the SEE Military Intelligence Chiefs (SEEMIC) Forum (with the support of the EUMS Intelligence Directorate, EEAS and NATO ID IS). Continue its efforts to facilitate and support development of the SEE Counter-Intelligence Chiefs (SEECIC) Forum.</p> <p>Further developing and deepening of cooperation in SEENSA forum as an overarching regional initiative in the security area validating its pivotal role in security cooperation, with the full support and guidance of the EU and NATO specialized structures. RCC will dedicate special attention to further developing and sustaining SEENSA and its working groups.</p> <p>Initiate a regional process of structuring information flow between regional initiatives and relevant national security institutions enabling structured regional exchange of information.</p> <p>Continue developing political support for activities in the security area and enable the cooperation between heads of related parliamentary committees and between the security and defense advisors to the presidents/prime-ministers.</p>	<p>RCC continues to support the Defense Procurement Directors Forum as an integral part of the SEDM project 'Building Integrity' that is about making the public military procurement more efficient through a regional approach, as well as about fighting corruption. SEE Regional Anticorruption Initiative – RAI involved in the process.</p> <p>SEENSA is being developed as one of the most important regional initiatives in the security area, having a pivotal role in any kind of security cooperation development.</p> <p>Through SEENSA a regional approach to exchange of classified information will be introduced.</p> <p>A complex information flow mechanism created among the different regional initiatives and structures, with the pivotal support of SEENSA Forum.</p> <p>A specific forum for exchange of expertise and political views on the different forms of regional security cooperation created, based on mutual trust, with the final aim of improving dialogue at the highest decision-making levels for addressing common challenges with a direct impact on overall regional developments .</p>		<p>regional and international partners in 2014-2016.</p>
<p><b>7. Develop the cross sectoral dimension in addressing the common</b></p>	<p>Enhance the cross-sectoral dimension of information and activity sharing and synergy, addressing the common approach to common challenges. This will be achieved through the cooperation mechanisms among RIs.</p>	<p>Inter and intra enhanced cooperation mechanisms will provide an improved information sharing means achievable through the RIs deepened cooperation. Developed operational links among RIs will provide space for mutual benefits in information exchange.</p>	<p>NATO, EEAS, GS Council of EU, SEDM, SEEC, US-Adriatic Charter, RACVIAC, SEESAC,</p>	<p>Meetings to take place once/twice a year with RCC administrative</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b><i>approach to common challenges in SEE</i></b></p>	<p>Specific programs adapted, or created, for regional initiatives to assist the SEE RCC Members in building the civilian expertise capacity in the security field through a regional approach. It will be developed not only in the ministries of defense, but also in other security establishments, such as intelligence and counterintelligence, as well as justice and home affairs/law enforcement structures.</p> <p>In-depth monitoring and analysis in security from a broader perspective - what does security means in SEE; together with the other units of the RCC Secretariat on the security aspects of other Priority Areas of the RCC that are to be addressed through security regional cooperation in coordination.</p> <p>Specific fora for regional security cooperation and exchange of experience and lessons learned will be initiated with the Chairmen of the Security/Defense Committees of National Parliaments of SEE RCC Members and the security advisors to the presidents/prime-ministers.</p>	<p>Based on NATO and EU standards regional approach will be adopted leading to a mutual mechanism addressing building the Civilian expertise and capacity in the security establishments such as the intelligence and counterintelligence, as well as the justice and home affairs/law enforcement structures. Higher interoperability and integrity on regional base and with EU and NATO achieved.</p> <p>Specific analysis produced with other RCC Secretariat Units on the security dimension in other RCC Priority Areas, as required by EU and NATO common policies: energy security, transport security, the impact of the security on economic development and social stability, etc. The analysis will provide answers on the correlation in SEE region between economical and financial development and security, between the energy development and security, between infrastructure and transport development and security etc. providing answers on what is the correlation of developments in different sectors and human security.</p> <p>Create a better political climate through stimulating a high-level political exchange of views aiming to politically facilitate the institutional cooperation in the field of security.</p>	<p>DPPI</p>	<p>support 2014-2016.</p> <p>Regular consultations and preparatory meetings with each national administration, as well as with the regional and international partners 2014-2016</p>

### III. Cross-Cutting Issues - Extending Participation, Widening Partnerships

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>1. Assisting the development of the parliamentary dimension of the SEECP</b></p>	<p>Assist in preparation of working documents for SEECP Speakers of Parliament meetings.</p> <p>Full political and technical support for the establishment of the SEE Parliamentary Assembly.</p> <p>Support the functioning of SEECP Parliamentary Assembly and its secretariat.</p> <p>Regular meetings through the network of MP national coordinators.</p> <p>Assisting cooperation between Independent Regulatory Bodies in SEECP countries.</p>	<p>Enhanced cooperation on Speakers of Parliament level aimed at institutionalising dialogue.</p> <p>Strengthening the SEECP Working Group on Parliamentary Cooperation as a permanent forum of national coordinators' on MP level.</p> <p>Further institutionalization and strengthening of SEECP parliamentary dimension.</p> <p>Setting up the SEECP Parliamentary Assembly and to its secretariat.</p> <p>Establishment of networks of Independent Regulatory Bodies in SEECP countries, taking into account the variety and modalities of their functioning.</p> <p>The exchange of experiences and good practices of the Parliaments, Independent Regulatory Bodies and CSOs of the SEECP countries become a continued process.</p>	<p>SEECP national parliaments SEECP Working Group on parliamentary cooperation RSPC SEE Secretariat of SEE Parliamentary Assembly. SEECP CiO and Troika Independent Regulatory Bodies in SEECP countries Civil Society Organizations (CSO) RCC Justice and Home Affairs Unit.</p>	<p>2014 - on going</p>
<p><b>2. Supporting parliamentary activities related to the EU acquis and SEE 2020.</b></p>	<p>Contribute to set up the Secretariat of Cetinje Parliamentary Forum.</p> <p>Follow the implementation of the relevant project which would be eligible for possible future funding.</p> <p>Organise seminars for MPs, experts and parliamentary committees on issues related to EU integration.</p> <p>Organise thematic activities for MPs, experts and parliamentary committees on issues related to 2020.</p> <p>Integrate the work of COSAP in the CPF.</p>	<p>Cetinje Parliamentary Forum serves as a regional WB hub for coordination of EU-related activities.</p> <p>Strengthened cooperation/mutual assistance - among parliaments on EU legislation.</p> <p>Strengthening and expanding the awareness of the legislative bodies on the 2020 issues.</p> <p>Further institutionalization of the work of COSAP.</p>	<p>Parliament of Montenegro WB Parliaments European Parliament EC COSAP Chairmanships RCC ESD Unit</p>	<p>2014 - on going</p>

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>3. Strengthening regional know-how and exchange on legislative framework for freedom of expression and its implementation</b></p>	<p>Support Academy on Media Law in South East Europe, its results and recommendations.</p> <p>Facilitate update and dissemination of pocketbook on freedom of expression in SEE.</p> <p>Support creation of a regional database on media regulation.</p> <p>Contribute to a societal change in line with good governance aspects of SEE 2020 strategy.</p>	<p>Dialogue between state actors and media in SEE deepened</p> <p>Legislative framework for freedom of expression and its implementation strengthened</p> <p>Foundation of free media solidified and awareness of their importance in a society raised</p> <p>Best practice and know-how in the region exchanged</p> <p>Regional network of media law practitioners built as a way to successfully address the challenges which the media in South East Europe face today</p>	<p>European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe, governmental and media institutions in the region, OSCE, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, EU, other partners</p>	<p>2014-2016</p>
<p><b>4. Supporting regional efforts to safeguard independence and sustainability of public service media in SEE</b></p>	<p>Forge partnerships in support of enabling the democratic role of public service media in SEE.</p> <p>Support knowledge transfer in SEE between journalists and media professionals on one side and relevant institutions on the other.</p> <p>Back activities which deepen dialogue between state and media actors in the region, to impact a societal change in line with good governance aspects of SEE 2020 strategy.</p>	<p>Freedom, independence and sustainability of public service media in South East Europe enhanced</p> <p>Public service content promoted through the media</p> <p>Dialogue among state and media actors deepened</p> <p>Societal change impacted towards more open, transparent and stable environment in South East Europe</p> <p>Understanding, dialogue, reconciliation and good neighbourly relations stimulated in the region</p>	<p>European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe, governmental and media institutions in the region, EU, OSCE, EBU, and other partners</p>	<p>2014-2016</p>
<p><b>6. Supporting increased involvement of civil society in regional activities</b></p>	<p>Engaging civil society organizations in various concrete aspects related to development and implementation of the SEE 2020 Strategy, as well as their involvement in core activities in all RCC priority areas.</p>	<p>Increased participation of civil society representatives in governing and implementing bodies of regional projects.</p> <p>Further strengthening of the RCC's role as the pre-eminent horizontal regional cooperation platform.</p>	<p>NGOs from and outside the region active in SEE; relevant regional organisations, initiatives and task forces; EU and other donors</p>	<p>Annual meetings with different NGO networks in the framework of the SEE 2020 strategy and other relevant RCC priority activities</p>



#### IV. Horizontal Functions

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>1. Assisting the SEECP</b>	Strengthening the strategic synergy between the SEECP and the RCC, organizing Coordination meetings of the SEECP Troika, RCC Secretariat and representatives of EU in cooperation with the country holding the SEECP C-i-O providing secretarial and expert assistance to the SEECP C-i-O including active participation in the drafting process of SEECP Summit declarations and other SEECP documents.	An increased awareness of the overall developments in SEE, harmonised priorities of the country holding the SEECP C-i-O with the actions of the RCC SWP and a better reflection of their nexus with the EU enlargement agenda , increased number of joint SEECP CiO and RCC high-level events, an effective representation of the RCC, as operational arm of the SEECP, at the SEECP Summits and other events, SEECP Summit declarations that include assessments of RCC's results and achievements as well as recommendations for future actions	Participating States of the SEECP, the country holding the SEECP C-i-O, EU	Coordination meetings to be held 3 times per year back to back with the RCC Board meetings, in line with the Calendar of activities of the SEECP C-i-O; SEECP events during 2014 – 2016 period.
<b>2. Monitoring and evaluation of regional activities</b>	Monitoring and reporting on regional activities in SEE and active participation in meetings and events. Maintaining and developing contacts with all stakeholders active in the region, exchanging, collecting and analysing information on regional developments. Providing feedback and support to the RCC Secretariat in setting up working arrangements with regional initiatives and international organisations.	Greater coherence and complementarities of regional activities in SEE, improved cooperative relations with regional and international stakeholders active in SEE, functioning working arrangements with initiatives and organisations of relevance to the priorities set forth in the present SWP	Regional organisations, initiatives and task forces, international stakeholders active in SEE	January 2014-December 2016
<b>3. Exerting strategic leadership in regional cooperation</b>	Enhancing cooperation and upgrading coordination with regional initiatives and task forces in development and implementation of SEE 2020 strategy. Providing expertise with the regional perspective, identifying needs and complementarities related to regional cooperation activities, capitalise on the interdependence/interconnectedness of priority areas, continuing the process of streamlining of regional taskforces and initiatives, facilitating activities providing	Established both political and operational ties between the RCC and relevant regional organisations, initiatives and task forces resulting in development and realisation of concrete regional platforms, strategies and programmes. -Streamlined actions of regional initiatives under the umbrella of SEE 2020 strategy.	Regional organisations, initiatives and task forces; National authorities; EU; International partners.	January 2014-December 2016

ACTIONS	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED RESULTS	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
	better climate for enhanced regional cooperation.			
<b>4. Providing a regional perspective in donor assistance, notably in the framework of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance</b>	Continue to contribute to the programming of IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme (IPA MB) through participation of its experts in the IPA MB working groups; facilitate assistance to the region from other donors; take part in the donor coordination process through its active participation in the International Financial Institutions Advisory Group (IFI AG) and the Steering Committee of the Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF).	<p>Ensure that IPA priorities correspond to regional priorities, increased focus on the need for beneficiaries to cooperate amongst themselves and liaise with other key stakeholders and the donor community.</p> <p>Through SEE 2020 framework provide the European Union and other donors with a transparent platform for identifying areas of greatest need and common interest for the RCC participants from SEE.</p>	EC (IPA and specific EU Programmes); WBIF; IFIS; other donors; IPA and other beneficiaries	Periodical meetings and consultations with all donors or donor coordination bodies, as well as with NIPACs
<b>5. Representing the region</b>	Actively participate in international multilateral fora and bilateral meetings and engaging in consultations of relevance to the promotion and strengthening of regional cooperation in SEE	Enhanced visibility of the region's European and Euro-Atlantic integration efforts, stronger participation of international actors in support of regional cooperation, closer relationships with national institutions and regional structures, contribution in identifying regional priorities that respond to the needs and the capacities of the RCC participants from SEE and strengthened role as an effective and coherent communication channel with all the stakeholders involved in regional cooperation in SEE.	RCC participants	On a regular basis, consistent with the pace of the implementation of the actions agreed in each priority area

**ANNEX II – SEE 2020 OBJECTIVES, STAKEHOLDERS AND COORDINATION MECHANISM**

SEE 2020 Strategy														
<b>Overall targets</b>	i. Increase regional GDP PPP per capita from 38% to 46% of the EU-27 average ii. Grow the region's total value of trade in goods and services by more than 130% iii. Reduce the region's trade deficit from 14.1 to 11.6 per cent of regional GDP													
<b>Pillars</b>	Integrated growth			Smart growth				Sustainable growth		Inclusive growth			Governance for growth	
<b>Pillar targets</b>	iv. Increase intra-regional trade in goods by more than 230% v. Increase overall FDI inflows to the region by at least 120%			vi. Increase GDP per person employed by 33%; vii. Add 300,000 highly educated people to the region's workforce				viii. Increase the rate of enterprise creation by 20% ix. Increase exports of goods & services per capita from the region by 130%		x. Increase the overall employment from 40.2% to 45.2%			xi. Increase government effectiveness by 20% by 2020	
<b>Pillar Dimensions</b>	Free Trade Area	Competitive Economic Environment	Integration into Global Economy	Education/ Competences	R&D and Innovation	Digital Society	Culture & Creative Sectors	Competitiveness	Resource Efficiency	Employment	Skills and Inclusive Education	Health	Effective public services	Anti-Corruption
<b>Dimension co-ordinator</b>	CEFTA/SEEIC	CEFTA	CEFTA/SEEIC	ERI SEE	Regional Research Platform	e-SEE	RCC TFCS	SEEIC	REC	WG on Social Agenda 2020	SEECCEL	SEEHN	RESPA, NALAS	RAI
<b>Other regional platforms involved in the dimension</b>	SEEIC	SEEIC SEETO	CEFTA	Novi Sad Initiat. SEECCEL	Steering Platform on Research for the WB WBIF/EDIF SEEIC SEETO	CeGD	CoMoCoSEE	ECS SEETO CEFTA SEECCEL	ECS SEETO RENA/ECRAN NALAS ISIS ISRB Comm. RRD SWG	CPSSC SEETUF AREC	ERI SEE CDRSEE		CeGD	
<b>External partners</b>	OECD, EC	OECD, IFC, EC	OECD, IFC, EC	ETF, EC (DG EAC)	World Bank, EC (DG R&I)	UNDP, ITU, EC (DG Connect)	CoE, ICOM, EC	OECD; EC (DG Enterprise)	IFIs (EIB, EBRD, WB, KfW); WBIF; EC (DG Environment, DG Clima), GIZ	World Bank; LSEE; EC (DG Employment)	ETF, EC	WHO, EC	WBI, SIGMA, GIZ, SIDA, EC	OECD, GIZ, SIDA, EC
<b>Monitoring system</b>	RCC/OECD			RCC/OECD				RCC/OECD	RCC/ECS	RCC/OECD			RCC/OECD	RCC/OECD
<b>National administration participants</b>	Ministry in charge of trade; other related institutions	Ministry in charge of trade; other related institutions	Ministry of economy; IPAs	Ministry of education; Employment bureaus and other related	Ministry of Science; Ministry of Economy	Ministry of Information Society	Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Economy;	Ministry of Economy	Ministry of Energy; Ministry of Environment	Ministry/ies in charge of Employment and Social Affairs	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs	Ministry of Health	Ministries and agencies in charge of PAR, Judicial Authorities	Ministries of justice, interior, police

## **ANNEX III**

### **Overview of Regional Initiatives and Task Forces in South East Europe**

## **Introduction**

Numerous regional structures in South East Europe (SEE) are the best indicator of the real need to pull together limited resources in order to obtain benefits of existing interdependence between neighbouring countries. In particular, it is related to limited national markets and economic strength, as well as lack of advanced legal and institutional framework to face rising social and economic issues. Development of infrastructure, better use of common resources and responding to some of the still remaining security challenges are an additional justification for the increasing number of regional cooperation structures and platforms. Thus, the region contributes in the best way to the complex European architecture, following the rationale as well as cooperation mechanisms established by the European Union (EU).

The RCC has developed partnership relations with 45 regional initiatives presented in this overview. They have been a relevant source of information and analysis in the wider process of identifying gaps and opportunities in regional cooperation. Furthermore, through common activities or targeted networking with regional structures the scope and boundaries of the RCC's activities were defined in the previous period. Regular mapping of regional activities also contributed to the development its Strategy and Work Programme 2014-2016. All of them are expected to play a role in further development of the SEE 2020 Strategy and to be a part of its implementing structure either through providing better economic, social and political environment in general, or through development of concrete sectoral objectives and targets, indicators and policies at the regional level, mirroring national priorities of SEE countries aspiring to follow core objective of Europe 2020 – competitiveness and growth.

### **I. Economic and Social Development**

In the Economic and Social Development priority area, the RCC is partnering with 10 regional initiatives – four promoting business and investment climate in SEE; four contributing to social cohesion; and two connected to the promotion of the information/knowledge - based society. These regional initiatives and structures are bestowing to the RCC, as a non-implementing agency, the ability to intervene and achieve objectives in its main areas of involvement within economic and social development. Interaction of the RCC with these structures is twofold – activities aimed at providing institutional support (such as political support, legal advice, best practice dissemination, fund-raising facilitation, etc.) and RCC expertise (helping set the agenda, defining priority areas and objectives, streamlining with other stakeholders, etc.). The degree of RCC involvement with regional partners varies according to the level of development of the initiative and its scope of work.

With a couple of regional initiatives, the RCC has developed common programmes and joint activities related, in particular, to the creating and implementing a common regional vision for economic development in South East Europe, mirroring and translating the targets of the EU 2020 Strategy into the regional context – the SEE 2020 Vision. In that framework it provided systematic exchange of information, as well as transfer of knowledge and joint training facilities (SEE Investment Committee, CEFTA 2006, Centre for eGovernance Development, eSEE Initiative, SEE Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of SEE). It also helped some regional initiatives to widen the scope of their partnerships and identify interested donors.

#### **1. SEE Investment Committee (SEEIC) – Sarajevo**

SEEIC is a high-level coordination body that supports the implementation of policies promoting foreign and domestic investment. Members of SEEIC include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia. SEEIC was launched in 2007 after the signature of a ministerial statement on the regional framework for investment in SEE, in Vienna, on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

In 2011, the management of the SEE Investment Committee was transferred to the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat that is now in charge of coordinating regional activities to improve the investment climate. The SEEIC aims to increased competitiveness of the region through joint target actions and promote the region as an attractive investment destination. It plays a key role in setting the SEE 2020 Vision and coordinating its governance structure.

## **2. Central European Free Trade Agreement 2006 (CEFTA) – Brussels**

CEFTA, in its current form, came into existence through the Agreement to amend and enlarge the Central European Free Trade – CEFTA 2006 that was signed by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (under its constitutional name), Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and UNMIK on behalf of Kosovo. The main objectives of the agreement are to expand trade in goods and services and foster investment by means of fair, stable and predictable rules, eliminate barriers to trade between the members, provide appropriate protection of intellectual property rights in accordance with international standards and harmonize provisions on modern trade policy issues, such as competition rules and state aid. The CEFTA Secretariat provides technical and administrative support to CEFTA structures in regional trade liberalization efforts. The Secretariat was established in 2008, after the decision of the Joint Committee of CEFTA in Ohrid on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

The RCC will continue its support to the CEFTA Secretariat on specific issues and initiatives that it deems important for increasing access to markets for regional companies, such as diagonal cumulation of origin and labour mobility. RCC will also extend its support to the operation of CEFTA 2006 Regional Academic Network.

The CEFTA forum of Chambers of Commerce has been created to promote CEFTA to its members and allow for better dialogue with governments and CEFTA structures. The Chambers have established working groups that mirror the CEFTA structures – Working Group on Agriculture, Working Group on Customs and Working Group on Non-Tariff Barriers. Members include Chambers of Commerce from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and UNMIK on behalf of Kosovo.

## **3. The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of SEE (RRDSWG) - Skopje**

RRDSWG is an intergovernmental organisation for regional rural development in SEE, which aims to empower and promote sustainable agriculture and rural development, through networking and permanent cooperation between all stakeholders of agriculture and rural development in SEE region. It was founded based on the conclusions of Leipzig Agricultural Policy Forum in 2004 and Agricultural Policy Forum in 2005. Members include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Kosovo\*. The RCC and the RRDSWG signed a MoU on Cooperation in the Area of Agriculture, Rural and Economic Development, Environmental Protection and Food Safety in 2009.

The mission of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe (SWG) is to increase horizontal collaboration among respective institutions - Ministries of Agriculture and international organizations for merging work directly towards Regional Rural South Eastern Europe in order to implement comprehensive policies and develop result-based initiatives. SWG serves to assure close, open, active, constructive and permanent cooperation among the Members to the ongoing integration processes in the EU, stimulate and organize initiatives and activities related to rural development on national, regional and global scale, lend direct support for conducting studies, assessments and research in rural development and assist in strategic planning and programming for rural development.

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

SWG is responsible for the initiation, preparation, coordination and implementation of regional development projects in SEE. It also supports Member Governments, academic institutions, associations and organizations in reinforcing capacity building and networking in SEE.

#### **4. Association of Balkan Chambers, rotating**

The Association of Balkan Chambers of Commerce was established in 1994 with the aim of assisting business activities in the Balkans. Members include Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Turkey and Serbia. The main priorities of ABC are: development of cooperation among the business communities in the Balkan region, as well as with third parties; encouragement and support of activities aimed at structural changes in the economies of Balkan countries with the view to EU accession; initiation and implementation of global interest projects for the Balkan region; representing, through the Association, interests of the member Chambers in front of international bodies; joint participation in EU programmes and other partnership programmes.

#### **5. Centre of Public Employment Services of SEE Countries (CPESSEC), rotating**

CPESSEC is a regional non-profit organisation that unites national public institutions or government departments responsible for the implementation of labour market policies or for manpower management. Established in 2009, CPESSEC aims to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences in all activities related to providing services to employers, and job-seekers and to improving the capacities of public employment services in South East Europe.

Members include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey. The RCC supports the activities of the Centre and is interested in ensuring its closer links with the SEE Employment and Social Policy Network. The CPESSEC was established by a partnership protocol signed in 2006 in Sofia. Guidelines for operation were approved in 2007 in Belgrade.

#### **6. SEE Trade Union Forum (SEETUF) - Zagreb/Sarajevo**

The South East European Trade Union Forum was established in 1999. Bringing together the heads of national trade unions of SEE countries, its purpose is to promote the social dimension of ongoing economic reforms in the region. Members come from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, *The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Kosovo\**.

#### **7. Adriatic Region Employers' Centre (AREC) - Zagreb**

AREC was established in 2008 to formalize the structure of regional cooperation among organisations of employers in SEE. The purpose of the Centre – which will also be open to other business associations – is to promote projects, cooperation and exchange of views and knowledge between partners in the region. It also promotes a business-friendly environment favourable to local and foreign investments as well as representing regional business associations vis-à-vis major international partners. The statute of the Adriatic Region Employers' Centre (AREC) was adopted on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Members come from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, *The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.*

RCC is committed to promoting bi-partite and tri-partite social dialogue at the regional level and advocating the inclusion of social partners in government policy-making.

#### **8. SEE Health Network - Skopje**

Founded in 2001 based on the Dubrovnik Pledge, the SEE Health Network is a political forum set up to coordinate, implement and evaluate the commitments of Dubrovnik Pledge and its regional projects for developing health policy and services. The main purpose of the Network is to provide leadership and sustain project ownership by the countries in the region. SEE Health Network is supported by a Secretariat located in Skopje, and the members include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria,



Croatia, Israel, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia.

The RCC and the SEEHN have signed an MoU on their future cooperation. RCC will continue providing political support and representation to the SEE Health Network and its regional activities and assist the Network in coordinating its activities with other initiatives relevant to regional cooperation in the area of public health.

### **9. Centre for eGovernance Development (CeGD) - Ljubljana**

CeGD was established in January 2008 as a PPP effort in order to address training, educational, consulting and research issues related to eGovernance throughout the region. CeGD is a decentralized regional network of programmes and training support, with an administrative focal point situated in Ljubljana, Slovenia, providing an overall coordination to regional activities.

RCC participates in the management and supervisory boards of CeGD.

### **10. eSEE Initiative (Sarajevo) and bSEE Task Force**

The Electronic South Eastern Europe (eSEE) Initiative was launched in Istanbul in October 2000 and is supported by the eSEE Secretariat hosted in Sarajevo by UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office since 2002. The aim of the eSEE Initiative is to better integrate SEE countries into the global knowledge-based economy by regionally supporting the development of Information Society. Members include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and UNMIK on behalf of Kosovo. The Broadband South East Europe (bSEE) Task Force was formed following the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding on Development of Unified Market of Broadband Networks at the Ministerial Conference in Thessaloniki (2005). Both eSEE Initiative and bSEE Task Force operate under the RCC umbrella to promote a single, open and competitive regional ICT market.

## **II. Infrastructure and Energy**

Regional cooperation in the field of energy and infrastructure is characterized by the involvement of a variety of regional and international organizations, initiatives, task forces, programmes, projects, cooperation frameworks and networks etc. The major RCC partners are described below. The EC plays a prominent role in their establishment and operation. Particular EC support relates to the Energy Community and the emerging Transport Community, as mechanisms of functional integration of the region within the EU in energy and transport areas, where adoption of the *acquis* is also progressing much faster than in many other fields.

### **1. Energy Community Secretariat (ECS) - Vienna**

The Energy Community is the major framework for regional energy cooperation as well as cooperation between the Contracting Parties to the Treaty establishing the Energy Community (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo\*, Moldova and Ukraine) and the EU; Energy Community is expanding geographically and in terms of binding *acquis* for the Contracting Parties based on the corresponding decisions of the Energy Community Ministerial Council. The ECS budget is financed by the EU (94.9%) and the balance is covered by the Contracting Parties.

The ECS is set up by the 2005 Treaty Establishing the Energy Community. Its main role is to promote creation of regional electricity and gas markets and their integration into a wider single EU energy market. In that respect, ECS tasks are: “to provide administrative support to other Energy Community institutions (the Ministerial Council, the Permanent High Level Group, the Regulatory Board and the Fora); to review the proper implementation by the Parties of their obligations under this Treaty, and submit yearly progress reports to the Ministerial Council; to review and assist in the coordination by the European Commission of the donors’ activity in the territories of the Contracting Parties, and

provide administrative support to the donors; to carry out other tasks conferred on it under this Treaty or by a Procedural Act of the Ministerial Council, excluding the power to take Measures; and to adopt Procedural Acts”.

Taking into account the RCC role in SEE 2020, RCC close cooperation with the ECS will be strengthened in the future. Integrating Energy Community achievements on the ground of EU 2020 requirements (sustainable growth) into the SEE 2020 will be in the focus of this enhanced cooperation. Integration of the energy dimension into the wider context of economic development and strengthening the links of the Energy Community with `bottom-up` players, players from the Competitiveness and Industrial Policy dimension of the Sustainable Growth Pillar of the SEE 2020 and even players from different pillars within the SEE 2020 (Integrated Growth, Smart Growth, Inclusive Growth, Good Governance) will be some of the benefits for the Energy Community emerging from this cooperation.

## **2. South East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) – Belgrade**

SEETO is a regional initiative comprising 7 members - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo pursuant to the UNSCR 1244/99, established to promote cooperation in the development of regional transport. The Core Regional Transport Network has been defined in the MoU on development of the SEE Core Regional Transport Network, signed in June 2004. The SEETO Steering Committee (SC) was established to implement the MoU with the support of SEETO Permanent Secretariat, which has been fully operational since 2005. The following activities are within SEETO`s scope of work: analyzing performance of the SEE Core Regional Transport Network; registering the progress made in the achievement of MoU`s provisions; drafting and updating the Multi Annual Plan (MAP), including organization of regular reviews of MAP; and supporting the SC in promoting policy reform and harmonization in transport sector.

The cooperation with the SEETO has considerably improved over a period after the adoption of previous RCC Strategy 2011-13. The RCC Secretariat has initiated certain activities in the field of rail traffic and road safety in which SEETO as regional transport organization has a prominent role to play. In the coming period, the RCC intends to streamline and align the transport activities with the SEE2020 Strategy and jointly with SEETO to determine their role and responsibility in reaching SEE2020 targets. Cooperation between the two institutions is functioning on the basis of regular consultation and exchange of information on relevant issues in transport sector. SEETO representatives are regularly informed and invited to attend events organized by the RCC Secretariat and vice versa.

The Transport Community Treaty currently under negotiation with the SEE Parties is designed to fully integrate the region into the European transport market and on the basis of relevant *acquis* of the Union, including in the areas of technical standards, interoperability, safety, security, traffic management, social policy, public procurement and environment for all modes of transport excluding air transport. It complements the enlargement policy of the EU. The Treaty builds on: (a) the MoU on development of the South East Europe Core Regional Transport Network of 11 June 2004, (b) the Addendum to the MoU for South East European Railway Transport Area of 4 December 2007 as well as, where relevant (c) the existing treaties for the Energy Community and the Common Aviation Area.

## **3. European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) Agreement**

In the aviation sector, the partners from South East Europe have undertaken an important step towards integration of SEE into the EU Internal Aviation Market by signing an agreement on establishment of European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) in June 2006. Contracting Parties to the ECAA Agreement are the EU and its Member States, Iceland, Norway and the South-East European partners (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99).

The agreement is based on gradual market opening, freedom of establishment and non-discrimination, equal conditions of competition, and common rules in all areas of civil aviation (economic regulation, safety, security, air traffic management environmental and social protection, competition, state aid etc). It commits the South-East European partners to implement the EU *acquis* in air traffic through transitional periods with a view to their full integration into the EU internal air transport market. Considerable progress has been made by all ECAA Partners in this respect but further efforts are still required to implement the *acquis*.

RCC will continue to put efforts on the activities which will enable better use of market access provided for in the ECAA Agreement in order to contribute to the improved connectivity in the region.

#### **4. ISIS Programme Secretariat - Brussels**

ISIS Programme, managed by the ISIS Programme Secretariat, is an initiative of the European Commission and Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe developed in the framework of extension of the Trans-European networks to SEE and in support to the European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) Agreement. The ISIS Programme was signed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2008 in Stockholm by Directors-General of Civil Aviation of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, representative of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99, as well as European Commission, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and Regional Cooperation Council. The ISIS Programme has been launched with immediate effect.

The re-orientation of the SEE Functional Airspace Block Approach (SEE FAB) towards the ISIS programme aims to support and sustain the extension of Single European Sky to SEE and enhance interconnection of the air navigation network infrastructures and services. The support consists of providing knowledge of the Single European Sky (SES) legislation and its requirements to national staff responsible for air traffic management (ATM) issues, and will therefore ultimately facilitate implementation of SES legislation - from transposition of the legislation to establishment of well-functioning structures. ISIS shall also provide a common integrated approach for all ATM-related projects in the region with the ambition to better address the needs of various stakeholders and provide them with coherent and pragmatic support while rationalizing the financial and human resources and ensuring that allocated budgets are adequately used.

The RCC retains Stability Pact's seat on the Governing Body of ISIS which is responsible for implementation of decisions of the ISIS Governing Structure. It will continue to be active in Air Traffic Management and civil aviation in general through providing political support to projects within the ISIS II Programme.

#### **5. International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) - Zagreb**

ISRBC has been established for the purpose of implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB), and realization of mutually-agreed goals: establishment of an international navigation regime on the Sava River and its navigable tributaries; establishment of sustainable water management; and undertaking of measures to prevent or limit hazards, such as floods, ice hazards, droughts and accidents involving substances hazardous to water, as well as reducing or eliminating their adverse consequences.

These goals are realized through the following activities: coordination of development of joint/integrated plans for the Sava River Basin (SRB), such as the River Basin Management Plan, Flood Risk Management Plan and Contingency Plan; coordination of establishment of integrated systems for the SRB, such as GIS River Information Services (RIS), and Monitoring, Forecasting and Early Warning Systems (for accident prevention and control and flood protection); preparation and realization of development programs and other strategic documents, carrying out and coordination of preparation of studies and projects; harmonization of national with the EU regulation; creation of additional protocols to the FASRB; cooperation and public participation. The ISRBC budget is

financed by contributions of FASRB signatories (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and Serbia).

The ISRBC has comprehensive scope of activities compatible to the RCC activities. Therefore, the RCC has established close cooperation with ISRBC primarily related to the assistance in preparation of project proposals, providing data needed for project development and fund raising. The implementation of Danube Region Strategy and SEE 2020 will further increase cooperation between the two organizations.

## **6. Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) – Szentendre**

The REC is an international organization active in the field of environmental protection, promoting cooperation among governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses and other environmental stakeholders, and supporting the free exchange of information and public participation in environmental decision-making. It is a project-oriented organization receiving significant support from the donor community. The REC has been implementing several projects addressing climate change in SEE in the past 15 years.

The REC was established in 1990 by the United States, European Commission and Hungary. Today, REC is legally based on a charter signed by the governments of 30 countries and European Commission. The REC has its head office in Szentendre, Hungary, and country and field offices in 17 beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. In addition to the abovementioned countries, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, Italy and Malta also signed the charter. The REC also has a field office in Kosovo\*.

Jointly with the REC, RCC launched a Framework Programme “Roadmap for Environmental Cooperation in SEE” in 2008. This Programme started with a Ministerial Conference “Combating Climate Change in SEE” which resulted in a Joint Ministerial Statement and adoption of a Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation. A MoU on cooperation between the two organizations was recently signed. The major goal of cooperation between the two organizations is to complement the existing and planned regional environmental frameworks. Common efforts are needed to raise additional funds for continuing cooperation and delivering expected results.

## **7. Network of Associations of Local Authorities of SEE (NALAS) - Skopje**

NALAS brings together 15 associations from the Western Balkans, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Slovenia and Moldova which represent roughly 4000 local authorities. NALAS Secretariat is responsible for the overall coordination and implementation of activities. NALAS was established in 2001 under the auspices of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (Working Table 1) and the Council of Europe.

NALAS promotes the process of decentralization in cooperation with central governments and international organizations, considering local self-government as a key issue in the current process of transition. NALAS builds partnerships in order to contribute to reconciliation, stabilization and European integration of the entire region. It focuses primarily on local finances, urban planning, waste management, institutional development and energy efficiency. Task forces on each of these topics develop different projects and concrete activities.

From the start, NALAS received substantial funding from the Swiss Development Centre (SDC). German Technical Assistance (GTZ) contributes predominantly to the many concrete projects developed by NALAS task forces. The Open Society Institute also provided funding.

Recognizing the need to promote a “bottom-up” approach, RCC Secretariat established cooperation with NALAS in the area of energy and infrastructure supporting some of its activities and organizing

joint events. Cooperation between the two organizations is expanding to other RCC priority areas and it is relevant for ensuring `bottom-up` inputs necessary for SEE 2020 process.

### **8. SEE Public Private Partnership Network (SEEPPPN) - Zagreb**

The role of SEEPPPN is to coordinate regional exchange of knowledge and expertise on PPPs, support assessment and propose measures for further development and harmonization of South East Europe's PPP environment, and identify viable regional infrastructure development projects. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, and Kosovo\* are part of the Network. SEEPPPN was established by a ministerial statement on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in South East Europe signed in Sarajevo, on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009 and the temporary Secretariat of the Network is located at the PPP Agency of the Republic of Croatia.

#### **Other**

Although they are not regional initiatives of the South East European format, the Danube Commission, based in Budapest (including Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany, Moldova, Russian Federation, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine and Croatia) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, based in Vienna (including the Western Balkans, Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine) are of special importance for coordinated programming of RCC activities in relation to navigation and environmental issues respectively.

High relevance for the RCC activities in the area of integrated water resources management has Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) which facilitates regional, sub-regional and national dialogues, provides policy support and implements demonstration actions on a range of aspects of governance for IWRM, river basin water management, joint IWRM/Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) planning, adaptation to climate vulnerability and change, private sector participation, water/food/environment interaction, integrated groundwater management, stakeholders participation, education and capacity building, and networking of targeted groups including decision makers, parliamentarians and the media.

## **III. Justice and Home Affairs**

In the area of Justice and Home Affairs, regional organisations have created effective operational and cooperative mechanisms in fighting trans-border organized crime, common policies and proceedings on police and law enforcement cooperation as well as joint frameworks for implementation of projects on anticorruption and combating illegal migration or improvement of cooperation in legal reforms. Besides their important role in creating strategic documents in this area, some of them are expected to contribute to the development and implementation of the SEE 2020 Vision under governance for growth pillar.

### **1. Migration, Asylum and Refugee Regional Initiative (MARRI) - Skopje**

MARRI is an intergovernmental organisation established in 2004 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from six Western Balkans countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). They have their representatives in MARRI Centre, which acts as a hub for consultations, dialogue, training, capacity building, information exchange and other regional activities. It is financed by members' contributions and donors.

The focus of the organisation is migration management, integrated approach to illegal and legal migration, asylum, border management, visa policies and consular cooperation as well as refugee return. Relations with the RCC are based on 2009 MoU, entrusting RCC to provide political support, facilitate project design and ensure regional coordination with other initiatives. Several actions have

been co-organised by MARRI and RCC, such as the annual Meetings of the Heads of Consular Sections from SEECP countries that started in 2009.

## **2. Regional Anticorruption Initiative (RAI) - Sarajevo**

RAI is an intergovernmental organisation established in 2000 by Ministers of Justice and it currently counts nine members (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia and one observer – UNMIK).

Its activities are financed by its members and the US State Department through RCC Secretariat. RAI serves as a regional platform through which governments; civil society organisations, aid agencies and international organisations combine their efforts to curb corruption in SEE. RCC provides political support to RAI, as well as acting as facilitator of project implementation, advisor and regional coordinator. A MoU between the two parties was signed in 2009 and a Survey on Justice System Integrity, financed by US State Department, is conducted by RCC, RAI and TI Romania.

Through the RCC Secretariat, RAI entered in a strategic partnership with UNODC. In particular, RAI plays an advisory role as an associate in the framework of two EU-funded projects implemented by UNODC: *Development of monitoring instruments for judicial and law enforcement institutions in the Western Balkans* and *Assessment of corruption and crime in the Western Balkans*.

With the assistance of the RCC, within its framework, RAI established Integrity Expert Network (IEN) as a pro-active forum to upgrade and enhance integrity policies and practices, and capabilities of its members.

## **3. Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC, former Southeast European Cooperative Initiative – Regional Centre for Combating Trans-border Crime (SECI Centre) - Bucharest**

SELEC is a law enforcement organisation bringing together police and customs authorities from 13 countries - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and Moldova. It is an intergovernmental organisation established under the Agreement and Charter signed in 1999 (SECI). It is financed by members and USA grants. In December 2009 in Bucharest, the *Convention on Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre* was signed and SECI officially became SELEC after ratification of the Convention by the parliaments of 9 of its members on 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2011.

The objective of SELEC is to provide support for Member States and enhance coordination in preventing and combating crime, including serious and organized crime, where such crime involves or appears to involve an element of trans-border activity.

## **4. Southeast European Prosecutors Advisory Group (SEEPAG) - Bucharest**

SEEPAG is a network of Prosecutorial Contact Points (PFP) functioning under the 2003 Declaration and 2005 General Guidelines signed by General Prosecutors from 13 countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey).

SELEC operational activities are conducted within the framework of eight Task Forces addressing issues of drugs and human beings trafficking, stolen vehicles, smuggling and customs fraud, financial and computer crime, terrorism, container security and environmental and nature related crimes.

It is financed mainly by the USA through SELEC. SEEPAG serves as a regional operational network that facilitates prosecutors' cooperation and mutual legal assistance. RCC Secretariat supports the increase of SEEPAG competences, as a network of prosecutors able to provide real operational support, legal assistance, advice and guidance to SELEC liaisons officers in the investigation of trans-border organised crime. Greater coordination has been achieved between SEEPAG and the Prosecutors' Network of the Western Balkans through the IPA 2010 project Fight against organized crime and corruption: Strengthening the Prosecutors' Network.

## **5. Southeast Europe Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA) – Sofia**

SEPCA is an organisation of police directors, established in 2002, functioning on the Statute signed in 2007 by 10 police services from 9 states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Republika Srpska, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia). Its budget is composed of members' contributions and donations. SEPCA's main objective is to build public security through cooperation of police services, together with citizens and its partner organisations. The Association promotes police transformation into an effective and democratic police service for the benefit of the entire population. Based on the MoU concluded in 2009, RCC coordinates SEPCA's cooperation with other regional initiatives, organises common activities (such as the Bled Conference on Stolen Vehicles) and promotes SEPCA as a driving force in the field of police reforms.

In the framework of SEPCA Women Police Officer Network (WPON) has been established with the facilitation of the RCC and significant help of OSCE and SEESAC. WPON is an independent network of female police officers from 10 police services in 9 states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina - Republika Srpska, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia). In the initial period (2010-2012) the WPON was financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The main mission of the WPON is to provide a platform for the exchange of experience and knowledge across police services in the region on the status, needs and priorities of police women in South East Europe. It also facilitate the advancement of the position of women in police, gender sensitive policing practices and advocate for the implementation of gender equality and democratic principles in policing within SEPCA police services. Members of the WPON are from SEPCA police services with the exception of Romania.

## **6. Secretariat of Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe (PCC-SEE Secretariat) - Ljubljana**

The PCC-SEE Secretariat is organizing and monitoring implementation of the treaty-based procedural mechanism on police cooperation in South East Europe adopted by eight countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia) and, after successful implementation joined by Austria, Hungary and Slovenia. The Secretariat is operational since September 2008, hosted by DCAF Ljubljana, and financed by Austria, Slovenia, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and DCAF. It prepares draft agreements and guidelines as well as lobbying for political decisions. Through its work and presence in regional meetings of ministries of interior, the RCC identified and presented the links between procedural provisions of the Convention, SELEC Centre activities and set-up of International Law Enforcement Units in the framework of the EU-funded ILECU's II projects. The RCC and its partners have been exploring institutional, financial and legal means to confer regional ownership of the Secretariat. In the framework of the PCC SEE apart from various thematic working groups, two networks have been established – the Surveillance Expert Network for Southeast Europe (SENSEE) and joint Investigative Team – JIT Expert Network.

## **7. Western Balkans Prosecutors' Network**

The Prosecutors' Network of the Western Balkans is a professional network of public prosecutors from 6 countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), established in 2005 upon conclusion of the MoU signed by the Chief Prosecutors. The Network was reinforced and its scope widened with an amended MoU signed in 2010. The Network functions on the basis of direct communication between 6 National Contact Points. They also serve as a judicial contact points in the international law enforcement coordination units (ILECUs). The network is supported by the EU and the Council of Europe. It aims at cooperating closely in repressing, investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of organised crime and

all other forms of serious crime, criminal groups and criminal associations. A greater coordination between the Prosecutors' Network and SEEPAG will be achieved through the implementation of the EU funded IPA 2010 project "Fight against organized crime and corruption: Strengthening the Prosecutors' Network".

### **8. Southeast Europe Law Schools Network (SEELS)**

Southeast Europe Law Schools Network (SEELS) is network of 11 Law Faculties from the 6 countries from the region (University of Tirana, Faculty of Law (Albania), University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Law (Bosnia and Herzegovina), University of Zenica, Faculty of Law (Bosnia and Herzegovina), University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law (Croatia), University of Split, Faculty of Law (Croatia), University of Skopje, Faculty of Law "Iustinianus Primus" (Macedonia), University of Montenegro, Faculty of Law (Montenegro), University of Belgrade, Faculty of Law (Serbia), University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Law (Serbia) University of Nis, Faculty of Law (Serbia).

The main goal is to institutionalize the necessary and highly demanded regional exchange of legal academic know-how and information in order to improve the academic and administrative performance and to build capacities for fund raising, high legal education and high quality legal publications.

## **IV Security Cooperation**

There are six initiatives in the domain of Security Cooperation with which the RCC cooperates. Each includes several SEECF participating states as well as countries outside the SEECF area, depending on the format of initiative and region covered. These have developed relevant security cooperation projects and mechanisms.

### **1. Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI SEE) - Sarajevo**

Its members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (under its constitutional name), Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia and Turkey. The task of Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI SEE) is to contribute to the development of a cohesive regional strategy for disaster preparedness and prevention. It is a regional initiative that seeks to provide a framework for SEE nations to develop programmes and projects leading to strengthened capabilities to prevent and respond to natural and man-made, i.e. technological disasters. The initiative brings together donor countries and national and international non-governmental and governmental organisations to coordinate ongoing and future activities and identify unmet needs in order to improve efficiency of national disaster management. The overarching goal of DPPI SEE is to foster regional cooperation and coordination in disaster preparedness and prevention.

Long standing regional cooperation in disaster preparedness and prevention in SEE, has not been effectively enough developed and a unified regional approach to disasters risk reduction (DRR) is still to be achieved. Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) is fully regionally owned, but its Secretariat still lacks the necessary capacity to take over a bigger role as a Project Implementation Agency with greater impact on the DRR Cooperation in SEE. The MoU constituting DPPI is expiring end of 2013

RCC is a member of the DPPI Regional Meeting and the DPPI Chair in Office (CiO) reports to the RCC.

### **2. South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) - Belgrade**

SEESAC is a joint project between the Regional Cooperation Council and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), assisting SEE governments with implementation of the 2001 Regional Plan for Combating the Proliferation and Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).



SEESAC's mandate provides for the implementation of holistic SALW control programmes with an emphasis on Cross Border Control, Legislative and Regulatory Issues, Management Information, SALW Survey, SALW Awareness and Communications Strategy, SALW Collection Programmes, SALW Destruction Programmes, SALW Stockpile Management Issues.

SEESAC has made substantial progress in working with governments in SEE on establishing national strategies on SALW control and implementation of specific project activities, which address the supply and demand side of SALW control. SEESAC has developed and successfully implemented the projects Women Police Officers Network in South East Europe (WPON) and Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans.

### **3. South East Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM)**

Initiated in 1996, the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial (SEDM) represents a process of cooperation among the Ministries of Defence of South East European countries. Members of SEDM are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, and USA, and Georgia and Moldova with the status of observers.

The main objective of SEDM process is to strengthen understanding and political-military cooperation in the region in order to enhance stability and security in SEE. SEDM objectives inter alia are "promotion of mutual understanding, confidence and cooperation among member countries; contribution of SEDM and Multinational Peace Force of the SEE (MPFSEE) / South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) to regional and worldwide security and stability; enhancement of the SEEBRIG interoperability and capability to deploy in peace support missions; facilitation of SEEBRIG employment in peace support operations; promotion of Euro - Atlantic integration processes of SEDM member nations; implementation and development of the SEDM projects".

### **4. The United States-Adriatic Charter**

Partners in this regional initiative are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (under its constitutional name), Montenegro, and the United States. Although there is no formal mechanism to include official observers, other countries, such as Serbia and Slovenia, have attended Adriatic Charter events on occasion. The initiative's founding document was signed in 2003, in Washington, under the aegis of the United States. The Charter has two objectives: to secure an open-door NATO policy and provide a framework for cooperation and mutual support to NATO candidate countries. The "A5" rotates the chair in six-month period to every partner country except the United States. During these six months, the chair organises various activities which always include a Foreign Affairs Ministerial and Chiefs of Defence (CHODs) meeting and other events as set by the country chair. As a rule, the Defence Ministerial is held only once a year, usually in November. In the most recent defence ministerial statement, Adriatic Charter nations reaffirmed their key objective of fostering regional cooperation, stability and integration of the partner states in Euro-Atlantic structures. Partner states declared that Adriatic Charter activities and projects should be coordinated and synchronized with other regional initiatives, such as SEDM (South East Europe Defence Ministerial), SEEC (South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse), RCC (Regional Cooperation Council), etc., in order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

### **5. Forum for Western Balkans defence Cooperation – SEEC**

The Initiative was established by EUCOM, Slovenia, NATO aspirants, which at that moment were Republic of Albania, Republic of Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and PFP aspirants Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro on 1 December 2004.

The aim of SEEC is to coordinate efforts of allied and friendly nations offering assistance to NATO candidates and PFP aspiring countries in the region thereby avoiding duplication, optimizing limited resources and synchronizing efforts, while achieving shared goals.

SEEC provides a multinational defence forum for discussing and exchanging information on bilateral and multilateral security cooperation programmes with NATO and PfP aspirant nations. In 2009, member countries agreed to establish three regional centres with the highest level of common interest to be developed and used by all countries in the region, i.e. – Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Media Training Centre in Skopje, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Defence Centre in Kruševac, Republic of Serbia.

### **5. Centre for Security Cooperation (RACVIAC) - Rakitje (Croatia)**

RACVIAC is the legal successor of the Regional Arms Control Verification and Assistance Center and is an international, independent, non-profit, regionally owned, academic organisation, accountable to its political decision making body, the Multinational Advisory Group (MAG). RACVIAC is financially supported by SEEC participating states represented in MAG, as well as Associate countries. The new Agreement on RACVIAC was signed on 14 April 2010 by Albania, BiH, Croatia, Macedonia, Greece, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey, and now is in process of ratification.

The mission of RACVIAC is to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in South East Europe through partnership between the countries of the region and their international partners by “transforming thinking on national, regional and international security cooperation issues; exposing participants to the benefit of cooperative approaches to security issues, primarily through conferences, courses, seminars and meetings at RACVIAC, as well as through language training and other applicable supportive programmes”.

RACVIAC annual program focuses on the three main pillars - Security Sector Reform, International Relations and Cooperation, with a special focus on Euro-Atlantic Organizations and Cooperative Security Environment, with the focus on Arms Control. Building an academic profile RACVIAC plans – seminars, workshops and conferences. Among the topics covered in their Program are: Transition of Military Personnel, Military Base Conversion, Defence Resource Management, Democratic Control of Armed Forces, Security Sector Reform, Counter Terrorism, Regional Security Cooperation, Disaster Management, European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and Arms Control and CSBMs.

## **V. Building Human Capital**

Within its activities in BHC area, the RCC cooperates closely with eight regional organizations and initiatives. The RCC will continue to promote regional ownership and cooperation in this field by building on the existing institutional frameworks and expertise. All of below listed regional structures have important role in development and implementation of the SEE 2020 Vision, particularly related to the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as in the governance for growth pillar.

### **1. Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Task Force on Culture and Society (TFCS) – Cetinje**

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Task Force on Culture and Society (TFCS) was established by the Decision of the Board of the RCC, adopted on 16 September 2010. The aim of the Task Force on Culture and Society is to promote regional cooperation in the sphere of culture by creating a platform for dialogue of relevant stakeholders. The subsequent goal is to maximize the benefits of investment in culture through its contribution to sustainable economic and social development by ensuring the coherency with other actions promoted at regional and national level.

Members of the RCC Task Force on Culture and Society are high-level officials from the respective governmental institutions of the RCC members from South East Europe, as well as the representatives of the RCC Secretariat, the European Commission and of the Council of Europe. Secretariat of the Task Force, seated in Cetinje, has the responsibility for technical management of the Task Force's activities and acts as the secretariat of the projects as well as the daily follow-up of activities.

During the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work Program 2011-2013, RCC Task Force on Culture and Society has been implementing 2 projects on behalf of the RCC: “Ljubljana process” and “Sustaining the Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in the Western Balkans”.

## **2. Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) - Belgrade**

*Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)* is a regional platform for cooperation in the field of education and training. It aims to support national reforms in education and training through regional capacity-building, transfer of know-how and linking these efforts to European frameworks for education development. ERI SEE is based on a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Ministers of Education, Science and Research of South Eastern Europe. Its institutional structure consists of a Governing Board, Consultative Body and Secretariat.

ERI SEE is in the phase of transition of its seat from Zagreb to Belgrade and creation of its permanent Secretariat. As a member of ERI SEE Governing Board, RCC provides advice and supports process of institutionalization of ERI SEE and its Secretariat. After finalization of approval procedures for ratification of the Host Country Agreement on the Establishment of the ERI SEE and its Secretariat, the selecting procedure for the ERI SEE Secretariat’s staff is foreseen. Idea to develop three Regional Clusters of Knowledge under the umbrella of ERI SEE was supported by the RCC, which recognised the possibility for the clusters to become regional activities which would be implemented by ERI SEE, possibly under the umbrella of the EU Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training.

## **3. RCC Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TF FBHC) – Vienna**

The RCC Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TF FBHC) provides the framework within which to assess the need and importance of BHC in changing societies, stress the need to link education, research and policy making, and promote regional cooperation in the field of human capital development. The subsequent goal is to maximize the benefits of investment in human capital development through its contribution to sustainable economic and social development by ensuring coherence with other actions promoted at regional and national level.

Membership of the Task Force comprises of members of the RCC Board, Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council, Signatories of the 2007 Istanbul Memorandum of Understanding, Members of Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe and Members of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan countries.

## **5. Council of Ministers of Culture of South-East Europe (CoMoCoSEE)**

It was created in 2005 and contributes to regional cultural co-operation. It developed, inter alia, the Regional Programme for Culture and Cultural Heritage in South-East Europe (Ljubljana Process), which included a joint action by the Council of Europe and the European Commission on the rehabilitation of cultural sites in SEE. The Programme has been developed through the implementation of several integrated projects managed by specific regional political and professional networks. In that context, the Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plans/Survey of Architectural and Archaeological Heritage – IRPP/SAAH made a significant impact in the region. The RCC took over coordination of the implementation of Ljubljana Process in 2011.

## **6. RCC Gender Task Force (GTF)**

The Gender Task Force (GTF) is a South East European regional initiative taken by the RCC from the Stability Pact for SEE. In all countries in transition women’s political participation is noticeably low. Equal and active role of women in political, social and public life is of significant importance for the region’s stabilization and democratization processes.

Years of systematic work of GTF on the political empowerment of women in SEE countries have brought important new experiences: women cooperating across party lines, and across ethnic and state borders; cooperation among NGO’s, parliaments and governments; women monitoring elections from a gender perspective; grass-roots and mass media campaigning, consensus-building, advocacy &

social dialogue. One of the most recent projects on strengthening women's entrepreneurship has been developed and implemented in partnership with the SEECEL and with steering and monitoring support of the RCC.

### **7. Regional School of Public Administration (RESPA) – Danilovgrad**

The Regional School of Public Administration was opened in November 2010, with the major aim to help improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration, strengthen administrative capacities as required by the European integration process and develop human resources in line with the principles of European Administrative Space. Its structure and premises provide excellent conditions for organization of the short term courses, which will be arranged in cooperation with prominent international organizations and renowned independent experts from the region and the EU. Potential of intensive cooperation between RCC and ReSPA was mutually recognized and first concrete results were seen in organization of joint regional trainings, such as the Training of Education Inspectors.

This initiative is supported by the European Commission. By helping to improve public administration, ReSPA will have an indirect influence on enhancing the rule of law and transparency. Improved communication and exchange of information on the activities of mutual interest would strengthen future cooperation between the two organizations, therefore streamlining regional efforts in strengthening national administrative capacities and avoiding overlaps.

### **8. South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECEL) – Zagreb**

SEECEL was formed in July 2009 as a national institution of the host country, after the initiative of National Coordinators of the Charter of Small Enterprises from SEE countries to established structured cooperation amongst the SEE countries / pre-accession countries on lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

The mission of SEECEL is to support all participating countries in the alignment of policies and practice in lifelong entrepreneurial learning with those of the European Union (EU) as well as to identify other global models that may enhance the role of entrepreneurial learning in the context of knowledge-driven, small enterprise-dominated and highly competitive economies. SEECEL's 2009-2012 work programme is financially supported by the EU, through the - IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme, and the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Croatia. As a member of SEECEL Steering Committee, the RCC expressed its firm support to the working programme of SEECEL, re-emphasising the importance of regional cooperation in respective areas. Furthermore, the RCC suggested that establishment of SEECEL in the next phase as a regional organisation (in accordance with the respective international documents and regulations) would be of particular importance for efficient and sustainable work of the Centre.

### **9. Novi Sad Initiative**

Novi Sad Initiative is devoted to institutional reform and cooperation in higher education, bringing together a range of institutions with responsibility in higher education from the Western Balkans, including universities and higher education authorities, as well as the European organizations and independent experts. It develops cooperation in the field of higher education, in line with the goals and policies of the European Higher Education Area. The RCC has co-chaired the Steering Group for guiding and monitoring progress of higher education structural reform. Actions included sharing experience within the region concerning higher education reform in relation with the best EU practice, strengthening capacity of administrators and policy makers, with direct involvement of all relevant parties in the region in finding feasible joint solutions for current challenges in higher education. Sharing experiences on qualification frameworks and qualification system development; identification of common qualifications; promotion of cooperation with the EU Member States and shared standards in the region were also among the activities. The process aims to improve transparency of qualifications which would allow for better mobility of students and academics within the region.

## **VI. Parliamentary Cooperation**

The RCC Secretariat has not only forged cooperation with the regionally-led initiatives, networks and International Organizations supportive to the parliamentary cooperation in the SEE, but also with individual parliaments in the region as well.

The European Parliament has been an important partner in this area. The RCC has facilitated the EP on targeting key experts on regional thematic issues and also provided participation of RCC experts on various thematic meetings involving either MPs or parliamentary staff from the Parliaments of the Western Balkans.

### **1. Annual meeting of the SEECP Speakers of Parliament.**

This is the highest forum of parliamentary cooperation in SEE. It is organized by the country holding the one year SEECP Chairmanship in Office which prepares all the necessary documents and decision of the meeting.

The main objectives of this forum, as stipulated in its main documents are to: Further reinforce democratic institutions in the South East Europe region, coordinate the efforts of national parliaments in support to the RCC and SEECP; promote further capacity building and institutional strengthening of South East Europe countries Parliaments; promote exchange of information, experience and best practices between national parliaments of the South East Europe countries at all levels (e.g. Speakers, Committees, parliamentary staff); and further encourage and assist efforts by Parliaments of South East Europe countries towards harmonization of their legislation with the *acquis communautaire* and other EU and international standards.

### **2. Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South Eastern Europe (RSPC SEE) - Sofia.**

Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in SEE (RSPC SEE) has been established after the endorsement of the meeting of SEECP Speakers of the Parliament in 2008, signing of the MoU, and the decision to locate it in the premises of the National Assembly of Bulgaria. The Regional Secretariat was intended to be a focal point which would coordinate all regional parliamentary cooperation activities among SEECP participating countries.

The RSPC SEE is taking part in preparing the Annual SEECP parliamentary programme in consultations with the CiO, CiO Troika, national parliaments and RCC. It has also been involved in the process of institutionalization of the SEECP Parliamentary Dimension (PD) and contributed to the SEECP PD Working Group activities. The RSPC is also a contact point for cooperation with the European Parliament, international parliamentary organizations. A debate on the transformation of the RSPC is undergoing. Two models have been initiated: the RSPC to be transformed into a Permanent Secretariat and the other model, into an International Secretariat. The new structure would expand its functions as an expert, operational and technical body and a focal point of communication with the country holding the SEECP Chairman-in Office, the SEECP Troika, the Standing Committee and the Secretaries of National Delegations.

### **3. Conference of the European Integration Parliamentary Committees of States participating in the Stabilization and Association Process (Western Balkans COSAP)**

The Western Balkans COSAP was created in Sarajevo on 16-18 June 2005 as a result of the Thessaloniki Summit held in 2003, whereby all WB countries were granted membership perspective once they individually meet the accession criteria. According to the Western Balkans COSAP Rules of Procedure, adopted at its first meeting held in Sarajevo in 2005, the Conference has a rotating Chairmanship, held in alphabetical order by the Chairman of the Committee for European Affairs of the presiding country, and meets at least twice a year to discuss issues related to the Stabilization and Association Process and to EU enlargement. The meetings are usually scheduled taking into consideration also the COSAC meetings calendar and are organized and hosted by the presiding

country. A troika composed by the Chairs of Committees for European Affairs/integration of the previous, current and future presidency ensures coordination of activities.

The Western Balkans COSAP has a clear agenda and perspective; it aims at strengthening cooperation between the Committees of National Parliaments dealing with European Affairs.

The RCC has taken part in all COSAP activities and has followed its work. The work and the agenda of this structure is very much in line with the activities of Cetinje Parliamentary Forum (CPF) and in the future, it could be integrated under this structure.

#### **4. Cetinje Parliamentary Forum (CPF) - Cetinje**

The Cetinje Parliamentary Forum is an initiative undertaken by the Parliament of Montenegro since 2004 to encourage and promote Parliamentary dialogue and cooperation between the countries of the region. The Cetinje Parliamentary Forum offers the possibility to share experiences and best practices and to rationalize Parliamentary work, especially in relation to the implementation of EU standards into national legislation and in other issues of common regional interest. To this end, and in order to promote a closer and more focused dialogue, the Cetinje Parliamentary Forum organizes meetings, which gather together representatives of Parliaments at different levels: Speakers of Parliaments and/or Deputy Speakers; Presidents/chairmen of Parliamentary Committees; Members of Parliaments; Secretaries of Parliaments; Secretaries of Parliamentary Committees and expert associates.

While COSAP is held only on the level of Parliamentary Committees dealing with European Affairs, Cetinje Parliamentary Forum has a wider scope of activities tackling other parliamentary committees as well. The Forum also hosts the meetings of the Parliamentary dimension of the Adriatic-Ionian initiative.

## **VII. Media Unit**

### **1. European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe - Zagreb**

The European Association of Public Service Media in South East Europe is a non-profit professional body of 13 public service broadcasters (PSBs), established with support of the RCC in 2010, and seated in Zagreb. Membership of the Association is open to all PSM from SEE, and is voluntary, without financial obligations. The Association has a statute, which provides for South East European Committee, Working Groups, and Executive Committee as its bodies.

The Association's statute defines its following aims and objectives: to promote development of PSM; foster productive contact between professionals working in the field; examine and debate issues affecting PSM; facilitate cooperation between PSM in SEE, particularly through co-production projects; help neighbouring stations; to provide programmes of expert training for PSM practitioners; exchange knowledge and experience in the field of technology, programme, organisation, legislation and advertising; and cooperate with other international organisations in building up and realisation of these objectives.